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UN CADJIN QUI DZIT CHER BON DIEU!: ASSIBILATION AND AFFRICATION
IN THREE GENERATIONS OF CAJUN MALE SPEAKERS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of French Studies

by

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ABSTRACT

More often than not, the linguistic research of Cajun French rests primarily at the morphological and syntactic level or focuses on aspects of culture and identity. It was thus my goal here to examine Cajun French at the phonological level. More specifically, I examined two phonological phenomena in Cajun French: assibilation and affrication. Both of these features may result when the dental consonants /t/ and /d/ precede either of the high vowels /i/ and /y/. Under these constraints, therefore, words such as *petit* (“small”) and *dire* (“to say”) are pronounced as [pitsi] and [dzir] when assibilated and [pitʃi] and [dʒir] when affricated. Affrication of dental stops is a well-attested feature of Acadian French in Canada and is a purported feature of Cajun French, while a high rate of assibilation is common in Quebec French. Assibilation, furthermore, is rarely mentioned when discussing Cajun French.

I used recorded interviews of 60 individuals from the Cajun French corpus, created by Dubois in 1997, to analyze the presence and variation of these features in four Louisiana parishes. My first goal was to determine where in Louisiana one finds these features. Secondly, I analyzed which linguistic factors affect assibilation and affrication. I found that voicing context plays a role in determining variant production in certain settings, particularly with assibilation. For affrication, I found that syllable position is actually an indicator of lexicalization in Cajun French. Nowhere is this lexicalization more evident than in the categorical affrication of *cadien* (“Cajun”). Thirdly, I examined the effects of certain social factors on variant usage. Results showed that gender affects variant use, with women generally preferring the occlusive ‘norm’ while men demonstrated greater variation. Location was the most significant factor to the production of both assibilation and affrication. St. Landry and Avoyelles had higher rates of both

features than Lafourche and Vermilion, for example, where the features were extremely rare.

Finally, variant rates increased among younger speakers despite an overall attrition and leveling of Cajun French occurring in these communities due to language shift and language death.

INTRODUCTION

Living in south Louisiana, it has become virtually impossible to escape the myriad aspects of Cajun culture that permeate the region. Whether it is the steady sound of the accordion in traditional Cajun music or the spicy aromas of cayenne in the cuisine, this ethnic group has enjoyed an ever-increasing popularity beginning in the 1960s. The current climate of celebration towards all things Cajun has not always been the case, however. For much of their history, Cajuns have been faced with physical hardship as well as cultural exclusion. Nowhere is this exclusion more visible than when looking at the historical path of their language: Cajun French. Cajun towns and villages, once geographically isolated French areas, were transformed into bilingual communities that represented a sort of linguistic crossroads. However, the expansion of Louisiana's infrastructure throughout the twentieth century and the encroachment of English as the language of the majority have all but assured the eventual demise of this unique variety of French as a viable everyday tongue. For the majority of young Cajuns, this is in fact already the case, as they no longer view speaking Cajun French as a necessary component of their cultural identity (Dubois & Melançon, 1997, p. 80).

Further complicating matters is the fact that—despite the increased popularity of Cajun culture—the linguistic study of Cajun French remains relatively under-developed. This dearth of linguistic research is particularly evident when compared to the overwhelming volume of literature surrounding other varieties of French in North America such as that found in Quebec or Acadia. For much of the past century, Cajun French has primarily only been the subject of lexically oriented studies rather than those of a theoretical or sociolinguistic nature. It is thus my goal here to add to the more recent works by linguists such as Dubois, Picone, Rottet, and

Valdman, whose research furthers our understanding of the complexities of this dialect at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic level.

In this study, I attempt to determine the origin, rate, and usage of affricate production in four distinct Cajun French communities. Specifically, I examine a tripartite linguistic variable formed when the dental consonants /t/ and /d/ are produced in conjunction with the high vowels /i/ and /y/. Words such as *petit* (“small”), *naturel* (“natural”), *dire* (“to say”), and *éduquer* (“to educate”) thusly represent examples of these combinations. For the purposes of my research, there are three possible variants of this linguistic variable that Cajun French speakers produce for words such as these:

- 1) The ‘standard’ occlusive (i.e. [piti, natyɾɛl, dir, edyke])
- 2) Assibilation (i.e. [pitsi, natsyɾɛl, dzir, edzyke])
- 3) Affrication (i.e. [pitʃi, natʃyɾɛl, dʒir, edʒyke])

I have chosen to label the first variant as the ‘standard’ occlusive for two reasons: 1) it represents the norm in many French communities, and 2) it is the most widely taught variant of the three. Assibilation, on the other hand, in which /t/ and /d/ morph into the affricates /ts/ and /dz/, is a dialectal feature most commonly associated with Quebec due to its high rate of usage in that dialect (Dumas, 1987; Friesner, 2010; Poirier 1994, 2009). Finally, affrication is a feature typically associated with the speech of francophone Acadians in Canada’s Maritime Provinces (Flikeid, 1984; Massignon, 1947; Poirier, 2009). As I soon demonstrate, however, each of these three variants also plays a distinct role in Cajun French. It is thus the degree to which they exist in Cajun French as well as the precise nature of their production that I hope to ascertain through my study. It is also my goal to bring Cajun French into the general linguistic discussion of

French in North America since it is more often than not neglected when compared to the Canadian varieties.

To examine the presence of these three variants in Cajun French, I have chosen to use selected interviews from the Dubois Cajun French/Cajun English Corpus (Dubois, 1997b) housed in the Center for French & Francophone Studies at Louisiana State University. This corpus, which consists of interviews of 120 native Cajun speakers, is the most detailed and complete sample of the dialect in existence. These interviews represent the speech of French speakers from four Louisiana parishes: Avoyelles, Lafourche, St. Landry, and Vermilion. For each parish there are 30 speakers—15 men and 15 women. The participants are also equally divided according to three generations with 10 old, 10 middle-aged, and 10 young speakers for each parish. Because I wanted to determine whether or not gender and age play a determining role in variant production, the prior organization of the corpus according to these criteria proved invaluable.

Location also represents a key factor in my study. In order to determine the degree to which dental consonant variation exists in Cajun French, I chose to include speakers from all four of these geographically distinct parishes. In total, I analyzed /t,d/ variation in 60 Cajun French speakers (48 men and 12 women). For each of these speakers, I listened to approximately 40 minutes of recorded interview and coded every word in which /t/ or /d/ occurred before /i/ or /y/. This resulted in a total of 7,578 tokens coded. After completing this process, I used the program *JMP* for the manipulation of my data, which illuminated answers to two key questions: 1) What is the most common variant used in Cajun French? and 2) In which parish(es) does one find these variants and to what extent? For the statistical analysis portion of my study, I then

used *Goldvarb* as my statistical tool to determine the degree to which my various factors played a role in the production of these variants.

As I have already mentioned, Cajun French is rapidly disappearing as a functional everyday language. The decline in the use of French in Louisiana is two-fold. First, the youngest generations of Cajuns do not often learn French at home, nor do they consider its use as a necessary aspect of Cajun identity. Secondly, the fluency with which those that do still speak French is often directly tied to their age. That is to say, the majority of the most fluent Cajun French speakers are older while those who are middle-aged and young typically have at least some difficulty fully expressing themselves in the language. I saw this type of fluency variation while coding my selected speakers from the corpus, which has its speakers organized according to three distinct generations. These generational boundaries also allowed me to establish whether or not there were any changes in the rate or use of my variants between these age groups. The age factor also helped me to determine whether or not I can detect any effects of language shift at the phonological level.

Before delving into the specifics regarding the phonological processes of assibilation and affrication or their role in the Cajun French phonetic system, I establish a concise overview of Cajun history. I believe that the socio-history of these people is integral to our understanding of not only the general linguistic situation of Louisiana but also of the relevance of certain sociolinguistic factors. Therefore, I begin Chapter 1 by outlining the history of Cajuns both before and after their arrival in Louisiana. In my first chapter, I also explore the unique histories of my four selected parishes in an effort to demonstrate the diversity of what is today collectively called “Acadiana” or “The Cajun Triangle.” It is my express goal that this work not only

establishes the perimeters by which these variants operate in Cajun French but also highlights the linguistic diversity of the dialect and its speakers.

It is difficult to approach any sort of sociolinguistic study of Cajun French without first considering the effect of the language's overall decline. In Chapter 2, I show how, beginning in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the shift from French to English has affected the development of French in Louisiana. Considering other works regarding language shift and language death (see e.g., Dorian, 1981; Dubois, 2001; Dubois & Noetzel, 2005; Blyth, 1997; Mougeon & Beniak, 1991; Rottet, 2001), I lay the foundation for considering how such a linguistic situation affects the presence and rate of assibilation and affrication in Louisiana. In conjunction with language shift, I also consider the relevance of gender as a sociolinguistic factor. Through an in-depth discussion of gender's role in vernacular language production, I am able to both establish assibilation and affrication as dialectal features as well as justify my decision to focus the majority of this study on male Cajun French speakers.

In Chapter 3 I begin to discuss in detail the general processes and histories of assibilation and affrication both within and outside the scope of the French language. After explaining the functional process involved in the production of these variants, I establish my own definitions for both assibilation and affrication that help to alleviate the sometimes-confusing nature of these terms. Then, I focus my attention on these features as they exist specifically in two common varieties of French in North America: Quebec French and Acadian French. These dialects are of particular importance to my work at hand for two reasons. First, they provide clues as to the phonological rules that could potentially govern assibilation and affrication in Cajun French. Secondly, they serve as potential starting points for explaining how these features came to be found in Louisiana. In the latter half of this chapter I focus my attention on the literature

speaking to assibilation and affrication in Cajun French. Because Cajun French is a relatively under-studied dialect of French, the works discussed there represent the rare mentions of these features and demonstrate why a study such as mine is beneficial.

In Chapter 4 I address the data that I have collected for my study. I begin this chapter first by describing the creation of the Dubois Cajun French/Cajun English Corpus (Dubois, 1997b), whose interviews I used to conduct my study of assibilation and affrication. I then continue by outlining the methodology upon which I conducted my research. I discuss the various linguistic and social factors being considered here, why they are potentially significant, and how I coded each of the 48 male speakers in my study according to these factors. Following this discussion is a distribution of my data. Having coded nearly 6,000 tokens of assibilation, affrication, and occlusive /t,d/ in my study of male Cajun French speakers, I am able here to determine which of these variants most commonly appeared and where I found them. For the manipulation of my data at this stage, I rely on the statistical analysis software *JMP*. As I point out in this chapter, I noticed during the coding stage of my research that certain variants were almost nonexistent in some of the parishes. The blatant scarcity of assibilation and affrication in Lafourche and Vermilion, for example, posed certain methodological issues that I had to address in order to adjust the scope of my study. Following the discussion of my data's distribution and the issues surrounding Lafourche and Vermilion, I am able to close this chapter by answering one of the most fundamental questions to my project: where in Louisiana does one find assibilation and affrication?

The distribution of my data in Chapter 4 leads to a detailed analysis of my three variants in Chapter 5. Having already ruled out Lafourche and Vermilion as parishes in which its speakers use assibilation and affrication, I focus solely on Avoyelles and St. Landry. In both of

these more northern parishes, I observed a large degree of variation between assibilation, affrication, and the occlusive. Therefore, here I use the software program *Goldvarb* to conduct a variable rules analysis of these parishes' variant usage. The purpose of such analysis is to allow me to determine which of my linguistic and social factors are statistically significant to these features' production.

I have chosen to treat assibilation and affrication separately in my analysis in Chapter 5 for two principal reasons. First, I am the first to simultaneously examine both features as they exist in Cajun French. Secondly, while they are similar phonological processes, they do exhibit certain independent behaviors that are best observed separately. I begin by looking at the relevance of factors such as location, age, phonemic context, and syllable position, towards the use of assibilation in Cajun French. I then follow this by a similar analysis for affrication. Through this process, I was able to determine which factors are influencing the use of assibilation and affrication as well as which factors behave independently of other factors. This in turn led to the creation of certain overarching rules for the usage of both variants in Cajun French. The separate analyses of assibilation and affrication proved that there are contextual rules that only apply to one variant and not the other. For example, syllable position does not seem to play any role in the use of assibilation while it is an important linguistic factor for affrication. Interestingly, I also noted that my speakers favor both variants in the voiceless context. In both instances, I noted that /t/ more often results in the affricates /ts/ or /tʃ/ than does /d/ change to /dz/ or /dʒ/.

My social factors, however, generally proved to be the most important in affricate production. As I show in this chapter, both location and age affect assibilation and affrication to the highest degree. Geographic distinctions between where one does and does not find these

features allows for me to posit that I am in fact dealing with two distinct varieties of Cajun French with regard to assimilation and affrication: that which is found in the northern prairies of Avoyelles and St. Landry versus the variety spoken in the southern bayous of Lafourche and Vermilion. The division of my speakers according to generation, which I outline in my methodology (Chapter 4), also proved fruitful in the final analysis. For both assimilation and affrication there is a correlation between the frequency of variant usage and the age of the speaker. In both instances, the young generation uses these variants at a higher rate than do their older counterparts. I found this result to be particularly interesting and unexpected. Because of the overall decline of Cajun French, the decreased level of fluency among its younger speakers, and the limited contexts in which these individuals use the language, I expected to find either less variant usage or high rates of fluctuation among the young. This is not at all the case, however. Instead, my young speakers show that they are innovators whose linguistic behavior even demonstrates certain new phonological constraints governing these features' presence in the dialect.

This discovery about the young Cajun speakers' ability to make decisive phonological choices in the face of an attriting language plays a central role in my conclusion. I focus here on relating this generational pattern to overarching themes in the theories surrounding language shift and language death (see e.g., Blyth, 1997; Bullock & Gerfen, 2004a; Dorian, 1981; Mougeon & Beniak, 1991; Rottet, 2001) discussed in Chapter 2. Much of the work on language shift in the past has revolved around linguistic changes at the morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels. These systems, which often simplify over time, represent the overall simplification of a language or dialect in the midst of death. There has yet been little research to explain how this simplification affects a speaker's phonological process or decisions. I thus explain how my study

adds to this body of literature on language shift while offering some insights into said process at the phonological level.

In the conclusion I also briefly reiterate how my work on assibilation and affrication adds to the theories surrounding the significance of gender in the use of the vernacular (see e.g., Dubois & Horvath, 1998; Fasold, 1999; Labov, 2001; Mougeon & Beniak, 1991). My research here treats this social constraint in such a manner that I am able to not only note certain phonological differences between Cajun men and women but also determine which of my variants may be considered as vernacular forms. Since I found little to no occurrences of assibilation or affrication among my women subsample, and given that women prefer prestige forms of language, I label both of these variants as vernacular forms in some Cajun French parishes. With the exception of one parish, the occlusive seems to be the “standard” language form for /t/ and /d/.

Finally, since the conception of this project it has been a primary goal of mine to bring Cajun French into the general linguistic discussion of French in North America. For one reason or another, the research of French in North America often centers around the varieties found in Canada, and they rarely mention the presence of the language in Louisiana. My research clearly establishes certain undeniable phonological links between Cajun French and these Canadian varieties, particularly that found in Quebec. I am thus aiming to discuss my research in such a way that we might begin to think of all of these varieties of French in terms of how they share certain linguistic commonalities. Creating this type of ‘common thread’ between these dialects can only serve to help us more fully understand the complex nature of French as it came to be found in North America as well as how it continues to change in the face of a increasingly globalized and Anglo-dominant world.

CHAPTER 1

SOCIOHISTORY OF ACADIANS AND CAJUNS

Any quality study of Cajun French (henceforth, CF) must first begin with an overview of not only the history of these people since their arrival in Louisiana but also of their Acadian settlement and deportation. It is thus here, in my first chapter, where I begin with an outline of the history of the people who today call themselves Cajuns. First, I discuss the historical circumstances that brought these French settlers to Acadia in the seventeenth century. I also briefly summarize the linguistic situation of Louisiana at that time. In the second section I provide an overview of England's control of Acadia and the forced deportation of a large number of Acadians from Canada. This deportation serves as the catalyst for the ensuing settlement of Louisiana by several groups of displaced Acadians as well as the beginnings of Cajun history, which I then discuss directly thereafter.

Stepping away from the historical events that led to the Acadian settlement of South Louisiana, I move to a discussion of the varieties of French found both historically as well as today throughout the state. While the primary focus of my work revolves around CF speakers, an understanding of the various origins and distribution of the major Louisiana French dialects is imperative. These dialects, because of their close proximity to one another, can sometimes provide clues to the linguistic origins of certain features in CF. For example, with regard to assibilation and affrication, there are certain phonetic similarities between Louisiana Creole and CF¹.

Following this section, I delve into the individual histories and makeup of the four parishes included in my study. Because I am attempting to find a correlation between variant

¹ More details surrounding the appearance of assibilation and affrication in Louisiana Creole as well as how this dialect relates to CF are provided in the discussion of these features in Chapter 3.

usage and location, I believe that an overview of these parishes' histories and who primarily settled in these regions could prove invaluable. The outline of these parishes then leads into a review of the linguistic studies already conducted on CF. Beginning with the popular dissertations and theses from Louisiana State University in the 1930s and 1940s, we see that variation in CF is by no means a new phenomenon. I then move from these more lexically driven accounts of CF to the most recent linguistic and sociolinguistic studies of the dialect. All of this information, from the historical to the linguistic, culminates in the final section of this chapter, where I examine the gradual shift in Louisiana away from all varieties of French to a monolingual English society. Here, we see that the decline in the number of CF speakers creates a unique environment in which to conduct a sociolinguistic study.

1.1 History and Colonization of Louisiana and Acadia

To understand Cajun history, we must first begin with the French settlement of Louisiana followed by an account of Acadian history. These two histories serve as excellent examples of the linguistic and cultural diversity of francophone North America even at its foundation. With regard to the colonization of Louisiana (circa 1699), those who settled here did not represent a homogenous group (Dubois, 2003). Instead, there existed a diverse group of Francophones from a variety of regions in France. Canadian officers and soldiers were also some of the first to settle in the colony (Giraud, 1953). Louisiana's diversity was not only visible in terms of the geographic origin of its early settlers, either. In addition, there was a broad sociocultural range of individuals who came to the area. These individuals included colonizers, soldiers, merchants, pirates, and religious officials (Dubois, 2003). With each group came varying dialects of French as well as a range of cultures, traditions, and objectives. Louisiana was thus the epitome of heterogeneity from the outset.

Moving forward to language usage in eighteenth-century colonial Louisiana, there are two key facts to remember. First, at no point did French speakers represent the majority group. From its foundation, Louisiana's population consisted of individuals speaking numerous languages other than French. These included Spanish, German, Italian, and the African languages of the slave population (Dubois, 2003). These languages are of course in addition to the Native American languages already there. The francophone population was thus effectively the minority in Louisiana. In fact, Dubois further points out that "French Louisiana derives its appellation from the prestige enjoyed by the extremely small elite that was in charge" (p. 45). This reality is in direct contrast to the contemporary exaggeration of Louisiana's French heritage. Thus, when considering any sort of linguistic feature of Louisiana's modern French-speaking population, one must equally recognize that the state has had a long history of linguistic diversity.

Secondly, even those who were native French speakers did not speak the same dialect, nor did the majority of them speak the "official" French of northern France or the Île-de-France (Dubois, 2003). Thus, even before the arrival of the Acadians, Louisiana's founding French speakers were in constant contact with varieties of French other than their own. The dialect(s) of French later brought into Louisiana by the Acadians in the latter half of the eighteenth century only added to and intermixed with the diversity that already existed.

The variety of French dialects in Louisiana at that time stems largely from the complexity of French usage in France. Beginning as far back as the sixteenth century, France began to experience the notion of a prestige variety of French (Battye, Hintze, & Rowlett, 2002). This prestige form came, rather unsurprisingly, in the form of the French spoken at court by the king and nobility. From Francis I to Henry IV, the kings of France defined the French language

through their own usages. Later, the king used literary minds of the seventeenth century like Malherbe and Vaugelas to ensure that *le bon Usage*² was heralded as the preferred form of French (2002). For the majority of French citizens at this time, however, the linguistic reality was entirely different. They spoke the dialect(s) of their region and had little access to or need for the French of the court. Furthermore, they were told by the upper class that they spoke a patois form of French, which did not follow the norms of the king's variety and was thus inferior.

It is also important to note that the notion of “language” during this time period was different than it is today. For them, language was the collective practices of those in power (i.e. the king and nobles at court). Thus, not speaking the language of the court doubly served as a marker that one was without power and inferior to those who had it. Asselin and McLaughlin (1981) summarize the notion of language during the centuries of the Ancien Régime. They state that language was: “l’usage des détenteurs du pouvoir, tous ceux qui étaient dépourvus de pouvoir ne parlaient pas la ‘langue’...ils parlaient ‘patois’”³ (p. 52). Such a definition of language is different than that of today, in which we consider the collective practices of its speakers as representing the norm. Recognizing the distinction between then and now is important for two reasons: 1) it hinders the application of any anachronistic judgments on our part in which we apply a modern notion of language to this time period, and 2) it demonstrates that what one considers to be “the French language” was not spoken by the majority at the time of the French colonization of North America. Instead, they spoke dialectal varieties that were typically viewed in a negative light by those in power.

² *Le bon Usage* is the term used during this time to refer to the variety of French presumably spoken by the king and those around him at court. This type of French, which was supposedly free of regionalisms and syntactic constructions of the peasants, was used as a tool to denote one's high-ranking social standing.

³ the usage of those in power, all those devoid of power did not speak the ‘language’...they spoke ‘patois.’ [My translation]

Furthermore, most eighteenth-century French citizens also had limited access to education, which during this period meant religious instruction. It was not until after the French Revolution in 1789 that both widely available, secular education (taught in French) as well as the notion of a 'standard' French began to become commonplace among the majority of France's citizens (Battye, Hintze, & Rowlett, 2002). All of this only goes to show that those coming to North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought with them an extremely unique sociolinguistic background specific to the region from which they came.

Turning now to Canada and the Acadians, we begin by exploring how a portion of this group of people came to end up in Louisiana. Like that of Louisiana, the founding population of Acadia (circa 1605) was also geographically and ethnically diverse (Dormon, 1983). Dormon notes the diversity of Acadia's founding population, stating that:

Although the great majority [of Acadians] were of French peasant stock, they seem to have been drawn from a wide area of seventeenth-century France... forty-seven French provinces were represented by Acadian family names with the greatest number proportionately coming from [Normandy], [Brittany], Poitou, and [Gascony]. (p. 8)

As Dormon's remarks here indicate, the diverse landscape that eventually came to be known as Acadia (or more appropriately, *Acadie*, in French) had settlers from regions all along the west coast of France. These regions extended from the northern part (Normandy) to the southern region (Gascony).

Upon their arrival in North America, the Acadians quickly came together to form a more uniform society due largely to two main factors: 1) they were geographically isolated from France and its other colonies, and 2) they isolated themselves from the Anglophones who were trying to gain control of the region. Having created and maintained several settlements throughout Acadia, the Acadians nevertheless enjoyed relative prosperity through this two-fold isolation. This prosperity continued despite the constant territorial battles between the French

and the British throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The Acadians, whose rural communities revolved around agriculture and trading, became accustomed to war. Since virtually the beginning of settlement, there were numerous fights and wars throughout the land. The Acadians were nonetheless able to maintain their way of life under the French crown for roughly a century despite the constant back and forth between the British and French over control of the territory.

France finally relinquished control of Acadia to the British in 1710. In this year, the main city of Port Royal (modern day Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia) fell to the British troops. As Acadian historian John Grenier (2008) notes, this is a pivotal moment in Acadian history. Three years later, with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, France ceded total control and rights to Acadia over to the British crown. After this moment, everything began to change for the Acadians. According to Brasseaux (1987), in the beginning the English control of Acadia “meant little if any change in the Acadians’ daily lives” (p. 15). However, other historians paint a less romantic picture of this time period than Brasseaux’s. Grenier (2008), for example, states that the British authorities considered the Acadians to be “hostages” (p. 17) and thought nothing of doling out severe punishment to Acadian dissenters. In any case, it is sufficient to say that the increasingly stifling nature of English rule in Acadia escalated. This in turn led to the eventual mass deportation of roughly 11,500 Acadians in the mid eighteenth century (Leblanc, 1979).

1.2 Le Grand Dérangement

With the shift of power in Acadia now in the hands of Major Charles Lawrence as governor in 1754, “the colonial government resumed its hostile stance toward the Acadian population” (Brasseaux, 1987, p. 21). Lawrence, over the course of the next year, devised several plans to cheaply and effectively remove Acadians from his territory. Through a series of military

initiatives and backhanded peace offerings, Lawrence was able to begin deportation of the Acadians. What ensued next, now referred to as *Le Grand Dérangement* (often called “The Great Upheaval” in English), is the forced exodus of thousands of Acadians over the course of the next several years.

As *Le Grand Dérangement* took hold, however, many Acadians escaped the English’s persecution and deportation by relocating to more remote parts of New France such as modern day New Brunswick or the Gaspé Peninsula. Many Acadians also settled along the St. Lawrence River Valley (Brasseaux, 1987). Furthermore, the common anecdote among Cajuns today that their ancestors were gathered together in Acadia and forcibly relocated to Louisiana is—to say the least—historically inaccurate. In fact, during the deportation, which began in 1755 and lasted around a decade, none of the nearly twelve thousand Acadians headed directly to Louisiana. They instead set sail for several locations around the globe. Those that did not escape to other parts of New France returned to France, moved to the Caribbean, or headed south along the coast to settle in areas from Maine to Maryland. Despite the variety of new locales for the dispersed Acadians, the majority of them all faced similar problems. For those that found new homes along the East Coast in states such as Maryland and Pennsylvania, Brasseaux (1987, p. 37) claims that they were confronted with mistreatment because of a general French/British animosity sweeping the colonies.

Acadians who sought refuge in France’s Saint Domingue (modern day Haiti) faced the travails of living and working in such a harsh environment. Finally, even those Acadians who repatriated to France faced an abundance of problems. Brasseaux (1987) describes their initial optimism in returning to France as well as their eventual disappointment in the French crown:

In the decade following the Grand Dérangement (1755-65), more than three thousand exiled Acadians sought refuge in France. French agents had led them to expect not only a warm reception but also just recompense for the sacrifices that...the expatriates claimed to have made on behalf of Louis XV...[However,] neglected by the crown, the Acadians, who steadfastly maintained their claims to compensation, led a miserable existence on a paltry royal dole and refused to become part of France's feudal society. (p. 56)

The unforeseen difficulties of the newly repatriated Acadians proved too much to bear for many, and it is this neglect that finally led many Acadians in France to seek new homes in Louisiana.

Despite the fact that Louisiana was by then under Spain's control, many Acadians saw opportunities for themselves similar to those originally found in Acadia.

Having been scattered throughout North America, the Caribbean, and France, many Acadians longed for a new locale where they could live in peace and reunite with friends and family. This desire came to fruition in the form of Louisiana. The Spanish, for example, promoted land grants as they sought the immigration of Catholics and anti-British migrants, both attributes that aptly described the dispersed Acadians. Thus, some of the recently expelled Acadians living in France decided to try their luck once again in North America.

1.3 Settlement of Louisiana and Emergence of the 'Cajuns'

While the exact number of Acadians who came to Louisiana is difficult to ascertain, most historians agree that the most accurate number is around 3,000 (see e.g., Angers, 1990; Dormon, 1983; Brasseaux, 1987). One reason that a precise number is unavailable is due to the fact that the immigration of Acadians to Louisiana occurred over the course of roughly twenty years. It is not a singular event, but rather one that began in 1765 with the arrival of around 200 Acadians—led by the now famous Joseph Broussard “dit” Beausoleil—and continued into the 1780s. The first wave of Acadians arrived in Louisiana looking for both refuge as well as land on which they could reclaim the agrarian lifestyle that they had left behind in Acadia. They were then joined

around fifteen years later in 1785 when a second wave of approximately 1,500 Acadians migrated to Louisiana (Angers, 1990).

Life in Louisiana was not necessarily easy for these new arrivals, however. Initially, the Spanish government sought the Acadians' immigration to Louisiana as a way of bolstering the number of Catholics in the region. However, the Spanish government, which in some respects treated the Acadians kindly, did not always offer them the peace and isolation that they sought. The Spanish authorities and the Acadians often disputed over land to settle. The Spanish did find in the Acadians, however, a usefulness that forced them to appease the Acadians in many ways. And, the Spanish knew that they could depend on their new Acadian citizens to help defend the border, as the Acadians, perhaps more than anyone, disliked the British. Antonio de Ulloa, then governor of Spanish Louisiana, sought to harness the Acadians' disdain for the British to strengthen his own military. Brasseaux (1987) describes Ulloa's regard for the anti-British soldiers, which included many Acadians.

Such citizen soldiers, Ulloa noted, were of particular "importance in this colony which must always depend upon the settlers for its defense. With such fighters in the colony's arsenal, the Spanish governor boasted, he could "insure the border" against a 100,000-man invasion force. The military prowess of the Acadians, complemented by their virulent anglophobia and group solidarity...hardened them against potential English-inspired sedition. (p. 79)

It is thus clear that, while life was not perfect for the Acadians in Louisiana, their beneficial attributes gave the Spanish an incentive to keep them relatively happy. With this newfound political clout, the Acadians could finally begin to make new lives for themselves, and they continued to explore and settle throughout south Louisiana.

Another notable aspect of this time period is the heterogeneous nature of the language communities in Louisiana. As I pointed out earlier, at the time of Louisiana's settlement there

was a broad range of languages, dialects, and cultures represented. This diversity persisted into the time of the Acadians. As Dubois (2003) notes,

Louisiana's early population (1699-1760) was neither culturally nor linguistically homogeneous, and French-speaking people were not in the majority. A very high proportion of the early population was from Canada, Africa, Spain, Italy, and the non-French regions annexed by France when the colony was established. Except for Canadians, all others – i.e. the majority – had a language other than French as their first language. (p. 45)

The linguistic composition of early Louisiana was in no way homogeneous and has continually been influenced by other languages and cultures. Upon their arrival, the Acadians thus only added to this heterogeneity.

Because of the diversity, it is probable then that those French speakers living in Louisiana were often exposed to other dialects and a general linguistic diversity. These myriad dialects of French were likely experiencing states of constant linguistic evolution, which eventually gave way to the three major varieties outlined in section 1.4. Furthermore, we should recall that at this time there was no standardized variety of French, so there existed little if any standardization among the various dialects of French spoken in Louisiana. This provided the French speakers of Louisiana with an environment in which they encountered the dialects and languages around them. Such historical diversity could help to explain any variation that I find in the rates of assibilation and affrication among certain modern Cajun speakers.

In returning to the political situation, with the passing of Louisiana from the Spanish back to the French and finally to the Americans in 1803, nineteenth-century life for Cajuns⁴ greatly changed. For example, the more affluent Cajuns (known as “Genteel Acadians”) became active in Louisiana politics. This group of Cajuns consisted only of the most elite, the majority of

⁴ Although the term ‘Cajun’ does not appear to come into use until several decades after the American acquisition of Louisiana (see Chapter 3.3.2 for more details), for the sake of separating the original Acadians from those that settled in Louisiana, I have chosen to use the term starting with the beginning of the nineteenth century.

whom were planters and farm owners (i.e. slave holders). Their interest in politics was therefore most likely born out of a desire to increase wealth and power at the height of the cotton and sugar production across the South.

Nineteenth-century Louisiana also saw many historical and political changes with regard to its French speakers. Consequently, this population experienced a corresponding language shift from French to English as the language of preference. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Louisiana was linguistically very different from today. Not only were there a plethora of dialects of French in existence but also a large number of non-French speakers gaining political power. This diversity contributed to the linguistic variation found in Louisiana at this time (Dubois, 2010). The influx into Louisianan society of both new French speakers from France and St. Domingue (modern day Haiti) as well as non-French speakers caused a great shift in the linguistic make-up of mid-nineteenth century Louisiana. Because of this, Dubois cites the period between 1830 and 1860 as a period of true bilingualism in Louisiana (2010). For the first time, Louisiana Francophones began to perceive the learning of English as more or less beneficial to their economic vitality. The learning of English even—approximately for some, more extensively for others—allowed the more rural Cajuns to participate more actively in the Louisiana agricultural economy. Dubois (2010) further describes how the bilingualism of this period stretched to even the most rural parts of the state, citing that:

The collective bilingualism doesn't just emerge in the large cities and the most affluent populations, it occurs as well in the coastal and agricultural regions and in the interior of the more modest communities. (p. 11)

This newly developed desire for bilingualism among both the French and English-speaking populations had a great effect on the linguistic landscape of Louisiana.

As the Civil War approached in the mid-nineteenth century, however, Cajuns once again faced uncertain times. Generally, Cajuns considered the Civil War to be an affair outside their own welfares and of little significance to their own cultural interests since many of them were poor and did not hold land or own slaves. Cajuns were therefore generally neither for nor against a particular side in the Civil War (Brasseaux, 1992). And while there did exist a few Cajun brigades in the war that fought for Louisiana, most Cajuns tried to avoid the conflict. Nevertheless, there did exist several instances in which Cajuns aided in Louisiana's war efforts against the North (1992).

Aside from the emergence of a true period of bilingualism in Louisiana, with respect to my study at hand, the most relevant Cajun historical events occurred after the antebellum period described above. The Louisiana State Constitution of 1868 delineated certain new language restrictions in two instances, which are listed below:

Art. 109. – The laws, public records, and the judicial and legislative proceedings of the State shall be promulgated and preserved in the English language; and no law shall require judicial process to be issued in any other than the English language.

Art. 138. – The general exercises in the public schools shall be conducted in the English language. (Louisiana State Constitution of 1868, 2009)

Both of these articles show the beginning stages of an overall preference in Louisiana politics toward English over French. I have yet to find any notable mention of the effect of these articles (particularly 138) on Louisiana's French speakers, however. I assume, therefore, that they had little effect, which would not be surprising given that many Cajuns at this time did not attend school for any real length of time.

Moving now to the early twentieth century, the Louisiana constitution of 1921 once again denoted English as the language of instruction in schools (Louisiana Constitution of 1921, 2010). Article 12, Section 12 uses verbatim the wording of 1868's Article 138, which marks English as

the language of public schooling. There has been much written on the 1921 constitutional article. The effects of the 1921 constitutional change on French speakers are well attested by historians and linguists (see e.g., Ancelet, 1988; Bernard, 2003; Blyth, 1997; Brasseaux, 1992; Brown, 1993; Dubois & Melançon, 1997; Natsis, 1999; Picone & Valdman, 2005; Rottet, 2001). The banning of French in schools had four major effects on the CF population: 1) Cajuns became ashamed of their language, 2) it forced CF speakers to actively learn English for the first time, 3) those who spoke English now had to learn how to read and write it as well, and 4) Cajuns were confronted with claims that their language was now invalid.

Even today, many older Cajuns still recall the mistreatment to which they were subjected at school for speaking in French after 1921. In fact, I have had several personal conversations with older Cajuns who have told me about the punishments they faced for speaking French at school. These punishments, ranging from the now well-known writing of *I will not speak French at school* on the blackboard to even kneeling on a bed of uncooked rice, produced an entire generation of Cajuns who became ashamed of their language. Natsis (1999) notes these punishments in particular detail, and he cites them as at least partially corresponding to the decline in the number of CF speakers today.

The punishment of native CF speakers lasted for years, and they became increasingly reluctant to use their language outside of the home. Another twentieth-century event that brought on the encroachment of English was World War II. Blyth (1997) explains: “the war hastened the assimilation of Cajun youths into Anglo-American culture by bringing them into contact with more English-speaking Americans” (p. 31). Some historians have conversely claimed that World War II had a positive effect on the Cajuns (see e.g., Ancelet, 1988; Bernard, 2003). There were instances of CF speakers being used as translators during the war, which receives credit as

restoring pride in Cajuns about their language and ushering in the ensuing Cajun renaissance. I have yet to find any substantive proof, however, that directly links these Cajuns' work as interpreters during the war to the increased interest in Cajun culture of recent decades. Rather, I posit that this viewpoint is in fact somewhat anachronistic. During this time period, speaking CF was still viewed negatively. It is only through our modern eyes, in the post-Cajun renaissance era, that we see how speaking CF as a soldier would be viewed positively. Furthermore, such a notion appears especially idealistic when one considers that—despite the increased interest in Cajun culture, cuisine, and music brought on by the Cajun renaissance—the language continues to attrite.

Nevertheless, in the decades after World War II there did arise a Cajun renaissance in which CF speakers experienced a newfound pride in their ethnic identity (Bernard, 2003; Trépanier, 1989). This newfound pride seems more likely to be a result of the Civil Rights movement than World War II, however (see e.g., Dubois, in press; Louder, Morissonneau, & Waddell, 1993). The increased interest in all things Cajun, coupled with the ever-growing realization that CF was quickly becoming endangered, saw the eventual creation of CODOFIL (Council for the Development of French in Louisiana) in 1968. This state organization, as indicated on their website, was conceived in Legislative Act No. 409 to “do any and all things necessary to accomplish the development, utilization, and preservation of the French language as found in Louisiana” (CODOFIL). Furthermore, CODOFIL's first director, James Domengeaux,

was immediately faced with the monumental task of creating a quality French language education program from scratch in a state with a poor track record in education of any kind. (Ancelet, 1988, p. 346)

The creation of CODOFIL had one objective: offering French in Louisiana schools as a way of preserving the language. However, teaching French was not always viewed in an entirely

positive light in the state. It was still difficult at this time to garner widespread community support for teaching French in schools for two principal reasons. First, many Cajun parents of the time still vividly recalled the shame that they felt and punishment they received in school for speaking French. Second, the pre-World War II discourse had convinced many Cajuns that bilingualism was a weakness rather than something in which to find pride.

And, rather than develop a local curriculum based around the varieties of French spoken in Louisiana, CODOFIL made the contested decision to bring in French teachers from France, Belgium, Canada, and other far away francophone nations (such as Senegal) to teach a “standard” French. This decision insulted some Cajuns (see e.g., Ancelet, 1988; Dubois, 1997a; Natsis, 1999), who felt that such an action once again invalidated their language. The so-called anti-Cajun sentiment during CODOFIL’s early years was never more evident than when Domengeaux himself, in defense of CODOFIL’s decision to pursue a standard French curriculum, stated that CF “was worse than redneck English” (Bernard, 2003, p. 127).

Despite its rocky start, however, there is no doubt that CODOFIL can be attributed with increasing the prominence of French in local schools. We must also recognize the organization for its creation of several immersion schools throughout Louisiana providing French-language instruction beginning in elementary school. As of 2013, CODOFIL advertises that there are now more than 26 French-language immersion programs in 9 Louisiana parishes (CODOFIL).

It is no surprise though that, after all of CODOFIL’s problems promoting French in Louisiana, CF continues to decline. Certain original shortcomings that plagued CODOFIL in the sixties and seventies still persist today to varying degrees. They continue to employ foreign French speakers as teachers. Furthermore, the curriculum is still based on academic French rather than CF or another variety of Louisiana French. These continued policy decisions, I

believe, are at least partially responsible for the perpetual decline in the overall number of CF speakers (which will be discussed in detail in section 1.7). However, we must equally recognize that the reasons for abandoning CF as a mother tongue are complex and not always related to CODOFIL or schooling. A major reason for the decline in CF lies in the fact that its speakers are choosing English over French as their preferred language, both at home and with their children.

1.4 Varieties of French in Louisiana

While the primary focus of my study is on dental consonant variation in CF, I cannot ignore the existence of other dialects of French in Louisiana, each of which may have had an effect to an unknown extent on CF over the years. Currently, those who study French in Louisiana consider there to be two main varieties of French still spoken: 1) Cajun French (CF), and 2) Louisiana Creole (LC). A third variety, known as Colonial French or Plantation Society French (Picone, 1997b; Picone & Valdman, 2005), was used by the wealthy plantation owners particularly in and around New Orleans both before and after the Civil War. This variety no longer exists in its spoken form, so I therefore focus this section on the first two dialects mentioned: Cajun French and Louisiana Creole.

Based on the historical information outlined earlier in this chapter, it would seem as though the term CF refers to speakers of French who can trace their ancestry to eighteenth-century Acadia. Such a definition necessitates acknowledgement though that several key francophone groups have been absorbed into Cajun identity over the years. These groups include, among others, the Houma Indians, French speakers of non-Acadian ancestry, and non-French European immigrants. Regular intermarriage between either these francophone groups or European and Louisiana communities helps to explain how even those without Acadian ancestry came to refer to themselves as CF speakers. Through years of intermixing and intermarriage, an

unbroken ancestral line to French Acadia is undoubtedly uncommon among today's CF population.

Many of the informants used in this study thus fail to be Cajun based solely on this criterion of Acadian lineage. Therefore, to understand this dialect we must first look at what the literature identifies as constituting Cajun and CF. In the minds of many Louisianans, CF refers uniquely to the language spoken by the descendants of these Acadians. According to this strict definition though, there exists little room for the other francophone populations who settled Louisiana throughout its history and now share many of the same cultural identity markers seen as 'Cajun.' Such a narrow definition also leaves no room for the aforementioned intermarriage that commonly occurred in south Louisiana.

One such group is the Houma Indians, who speak a variety of French so closely resembling CF that they are often grouped together linguistically. The Houma Indian population represents just one reason as to why the scholarly research on CF has in recent years seen a new trend among researchers in relabeling the current dialects of French in Louisiana. For CF, there are those—such as some social researchers and cultural advocacy groups—who prefer the term Louisiana French. This term, they contend, lacks the inference that all of its speakers are somehow historically connected to the expelled Acadians. The most recent dictionary on French in Louisiana even addresses this issue in its title: *Dictionary of Louisiana French: As Spoken in Cajun, Creole, and American Indian Communities* (Valdman et al., 2009). The switch to the term Louisiana French is thus a means of inclusion. Ironically though, the preference among social scientists for 'Louisiana French' over 'Cajun French' reflects only their own perception of this group's identity, and it does not consider that of the actual group and its speakers.

The necessity for Acadian ancestry has actually been shown to be no longer applicable to today's younger Cajun populations. Dubois and Melançon's 1997 study of Cajun identity demonstrated that many younger Cajuns no longer see having Acadian ancestry (or even speaking French) as necessary to call oneself by the term. In their study, they specifically asked informants whether or not Acadian ancestry was a necessary part of being 'Cajun,' to which the majority said 'no' (Dubois & Melançon, 1997). Such a change in the young population's self-definition of 'Cajun' highlights the sometimes ineffectiveness of scientific labeling. For Cajuns (as opposed to social scientists), the concept of identity is not static but rather dynamic. It therefore changes as the group sees fit.

The goal of my study is not to debate the validity of any one term, but one must look at these identity labels with caution. For the purposes of my study at hand, I contend then that continuing the use of 'Cajun French' is appropriate and does not exclude any person represented in my sample of speakers. As such, CF speakers constitute the largest number of francophone speakers in Louisiana⁵. My definition should also be more than adequate to effectively discuss the features of assimilation and affrication as they appear in the speech of the men and women in my current research.

Louisiana Creole (LC), on the other hand, represents the smaller of the two main local francophone populations. In Louisiana, one often hears (outside of the academic community) that the difference between CF and LC falls along racial lines (Le Menestrel, 1999). Such a distinction is inaccurate, however, as there exist speakers of LC and CF from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds (Brasseaux, Fontenot, & Oubre, 1994). Some speakers of these varieties nevertheless maintain this racial distinction when talking about LC and CF. But, when I talk

⁵ More information on the specific number of CF speakers currently living in Louisiana may be found in section 1.7.

about LC I am in no way prescribing any sort of racial identity to the term. Rather, I am referring to a distinct dialect of French as outlined in the rest of this section. This dialect, which nowadays linguistically differs primarily from CF in its verbal construction (Picone & Valdman, 2005), is often compared to Haitian Creole (Klingler, 2005, p. 350). As Klingler later points out, however, the link between LC and Haitian Creole is greatly exaggerated based on the small number of slaves coming from the Caribbean in the eighteenth century as well as the existence of a creole in Louisiana before that period. He offers instead that LC more aptly represents a dialect of French born primarily out of the contact between European French speakers and Africans on the plantations near New Orleans (p. 351).

Several linguists have provided estimates as to the size of the LC population. Neumann, for example, claimed in 1985 that there were between 60,000 and 80,000 LC speakers (Neumann, 1985, p. 20). She also noted that these estimates could not be made more precise because of insufficient information. Twenty years later, Klingler (2005) states that there are likely less than 30,000 LC speakers left in Louisiana (p. 351). The drastic decline in speakers between these two periods demonstrates that LC, like CF, is experiencing the effects of language shift, as more and more younger Creoles are monolingual English speakers. But, little can be said with certainty as to the exact number of LC speakers still in existence in Louisiana today. The estimates of experts like Neumann and Klingler are based on census data, which is subject to problems. The biggest of which is the fact that it relies on honest and accurate answers from LC speakers. According to The American Community Survey—an annual survey conducted by the United States Census Bureau and the main source of specific language data for the past few decades—there are 6,297 Creole speakers in Louisiana as of 2010 (American Community

Survey, 2012). Despite the discrepancies between these numbers, linguists like Klingler and Neumann agree that LC is attriting.

In terms of geographic distribution, the primary populations of LC speakers (and CF speakers, for that matter) reside in the southern portion of the state. While the traditionally Cajun parishes constitute together the region known colloquially as Acadiana (discussed in further detail in section 1.5), LC speech communities are often located within this area as well. Thus, the potential for language contact and influence between the two dialects remains high. As I explore in Chapter 3, for example, the appearance of both assibilation and affrication in LC could offer clues as to its significance in the varieties of CF being examined here. The majority of LC speakers are found in St. Martin Parish (Brown, 1993, p. 73). The neighboring parishes of St. Mary, Iberia, Pointe Coupée, and St. Landry, as well as Avoyelles, also contain LC populations. I have found no mention of significant LC communities in either Vermilion Parish or Lafourche Parish, which constitute the coastal parishes of my study.

1.5 The Four Parishes of my Study

I now turn to a brief historic and geographic summary of the four parishes examined here in my study: Avoyelles, Lafourche, St. Landry, and Vermilion. These parishes, which are the four represented in the Dubois Cajun French Corpus and used for my research into assibilation and affrication, represent four of the most francophone regions in the state. A study of the way in which the residents of these parishes use CF therefore provides us with a good representation of the dialect as a whole. These parishes also represent four distinct geographic regions of Acadiana: two situated in the central and northern prairies (St. Landry and Avoyelles); two along the Gulf coast (Lafourche and Vermilion). In Figure 1.1 below, one can see a map of Acadiana

with the four parishes of my study labeled. Following this is Figure 1.2, which is a set four maps of the four parishes of my study indicating the major towns in each.

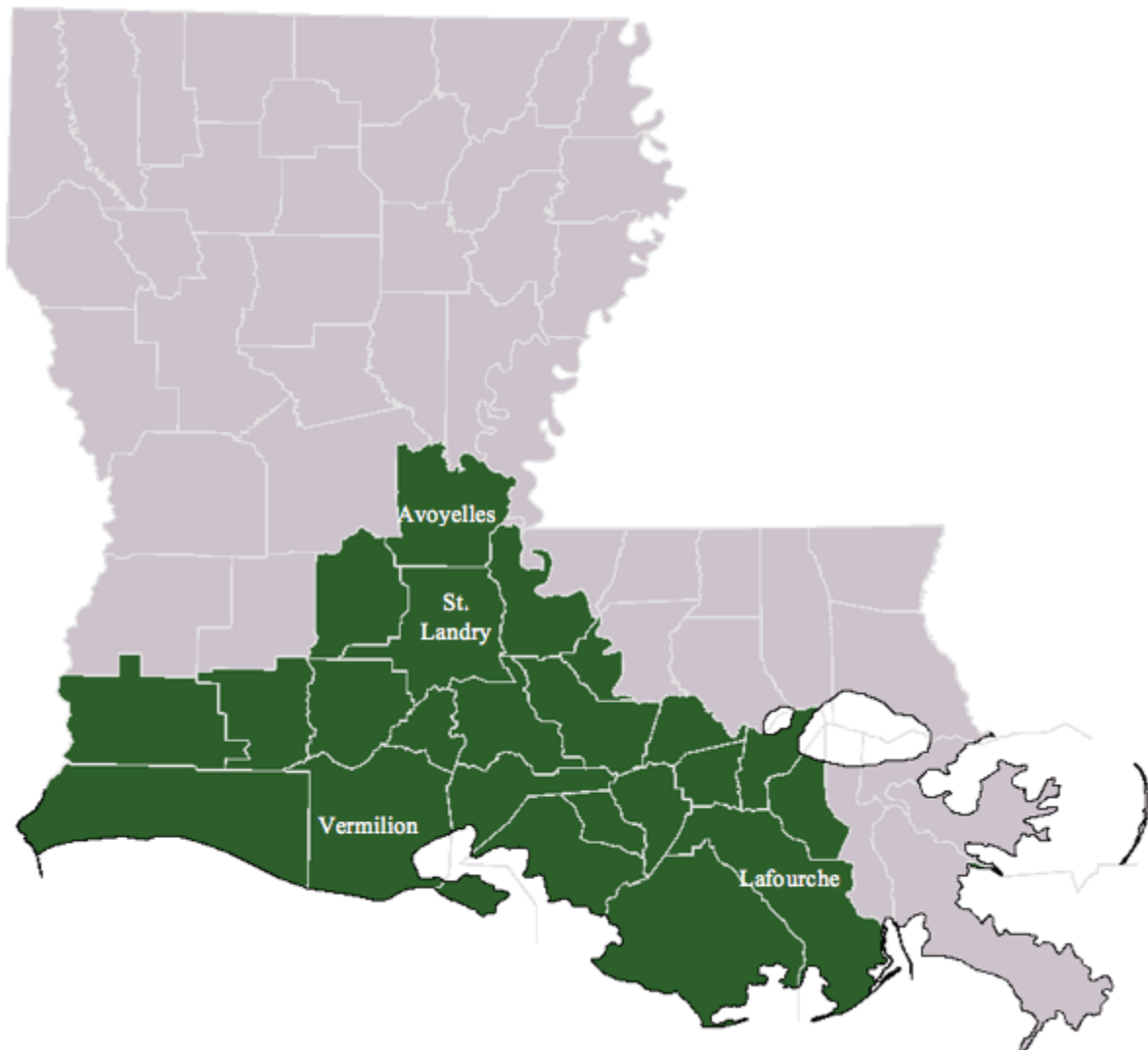


Figure 1.1. Map of Louisiana with Acadiana in green. Template adapted from “Acadiana Parishes Map” (2005) to show names of the four parishes of this study.

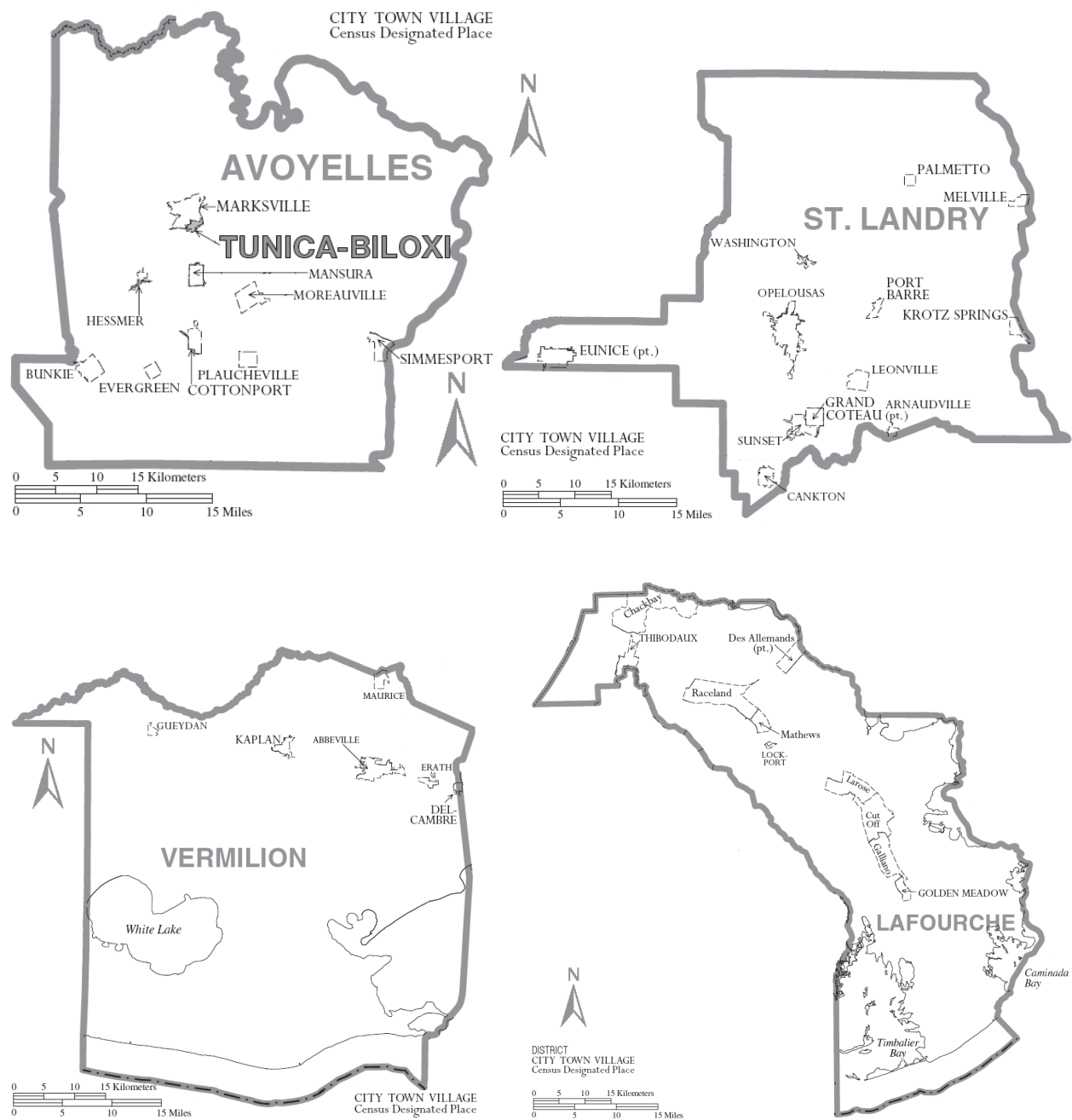


Figure 1.2. Maps of the four parishes of my study. Adapted from the United States Census Bureau's website (2000).

As one can see in Figure 1.1, Avoyelles Parish, as the northernmost parish of Acadiana, represents the least populated parish in my study. According to the 2011 U.S. Census estimates, Avoyelles has a population of 41,895 (U.S. Census, 2012a). The parish seat of Avoyelles is Marksville, which lies slightly to the northwest of the center of the parish and can be seen in Figure 1.2. Marksville is also the town in which the majority of the corpus interviews were conducted. Historians and linguists typically mark this sparsely populated prairie parish as distinct from the rest of the triangle. As Brasseaux (1992) notes, the Acadians who settled Avoyelles were always a minority of the parish, numbering in the low hundreds in the nineteenth century (p. 107). Instead, many of those who settled Avoyelles were actually from other parts of Canada (such as Quebec) and France.

Brasseaux (1992) goes on to cite this difference in francophone origin as one of the reasons for which the residents of Avoyelles (and neighboring Evangeline Parish⁶) privately prefer the term ‘Creole’ rather than ‘Cajun’ as their identity marker (p. 111). Having spent a great deal of time in Avoyelles Parish over the past seven years, I cannot recall anyone who identified themselves as ‘Creole.’ However, I have heard people use the term to refer to their variety of French, exclaiming *Excuse mon créole* (“excuse my creole”) to indicate that I might not understand their variety of French. Equally, I have noted that the majority of the Avoyelles residents whom I have encountered do not refer to themselves as ‘Cajun.’ Instead, they most commonly use the term ‘Coonass,’ which is considered a derogatory label for Cajuns in much of the rest of Acadiana. Nevertheless, this divergence in origin could potentially help to explain any phonetic differences between my speakers from Avoyelles and those from the other three parishes.

⁶ Evangeline Parish is significant to my work primarily because it represents one of the only CF regions in which assimilation has been documented by linguists (see Picone & Valdman, 2005; Russell, 2010). More details on Evangeline Parish can be found in Chapter 3.

The geographic isolation of Avoyelles' francophone populations may also play a role in their phonetic behavior. Breton and Louder (1979), in their geographic study of Louisiana francophone populations, examined the percentage of French speakers down to the ward level. They also noted the non-Acadian origins of Avoyelles' francophone populations, citing that they instead were primarily the descendants of decommissioned French soldiers from Napoleon's army (p. 223). In their outline of the francophone wards of Avoyelles, Breton and Louder also conclude that this lightly populated parish contains a number of English-speaking areas that acted to help isolate its French-speaking towns from others. This sentiment, along with the unique ancestry of Avoyelles, could provide clues to any potential differences between the CF spoken there and elsewhere.

Directly to the south of Avoyelles lies St. Landry Parish. With a 2011-estimated population of 83,552 (U.S. Census, 2012c), St. Landry is the second most populated parish of the corpus. If Avoyelles Parish represents the northernmost portion of Acadiana, St. Landry more closely represents its center. Its parish seat is Opelousas, however, the majority of CF speakers from the corpus reside in or around Eunice, which is located in the westernmost tip of the parish near the St. Landry and Evangeline border. Unlike Avoyelles, St. Landry's French speakers claim strong historical ties to the original Acadian settlers. Moreover, the early nineteenth century saw a strong migration of many Acadians to St. Landry from other parts of south Louisiana (Brasseaux, 1992, p. 16). These relocated Acadians settled in St. Landry as farmers operating sugar cane fields. These farmers most likely represent the ancestors of the St. Landry speakers used for my current research. Finally, despite a shared border between St. Landry and Avoyelles, I have found no claims of linguistic ties between the two parishes' CF communities.

Vermilion Parish is located along the south-central coast of the triangle. It has an estimated population of 58,276 (U.S. Census, 2012d), and the parish seat is the town of Abbeville. The francophone populations of Vermilion are strongly considered as Cajun. In fact, Brasseaux (1992) has much to say on the Cajun population of Vermilion and the variety of French found there. He states:

In regions such as...the lower prairie sections of Vermilion Parish, where the Acadian population remained the dominant cultural force and intercultural marriages were limited, the archaic (seventeenth-century) French pronunciation patterns of predispersal Acadia were preserved. French idioms and pronunciation in these parts of Louisiana remain remarkably similar to those of Acadians in the Canadian Maritimes. (pp. 109–110)

Because of Brasseaux's assertion that Vermilion's CF speakers have a distinctly Acadian pronunciation, I expect to find a high percentage of affrication, as it is a quintessential marker of Acadian speech.

At the southeastern tip of Acadiana we find Lafourche Parish. With 96,666 residents (U.S. Census, 2012b), Lafourche is the most populated parish of the four in the corpus. Its parish seat is Thibodaux. In terms of original Acadian settlement, Lafourche Parish was settled relatively later than many of the other parishes in south Louisiana. The first wave of Acadians who came to Louisiana began in 1763. However, according to Rottet (2004):

The upper and lower stretches of Bayou Lafourche were originally settled predominantly in and after 1785 by Acadians who had spent between 21 and 27 years in western France, primarily in Brittany and Poitou. (pp. 180–181)

I then wonder, could the length of time that these Lafourche settlers spent in France after their expulsion from Canada have a linguistic effect on the type of CF spoken there today? These Acadians may have adapted to the French spoken around them in France as well as adopted some of its linguistic features. Furthermore, Rottet goes on to note that many of these Acadians not only came to Lafourche after over two decades in France, but they oftentimes even brought

French spouses as well (p. 181). The extent to which the differences in Lafourche's settlement affect assibilation and affrication in CF has yet to be determined.

1.6 Linguistic Studies of Cajun French

The overall linguistic study of CF—while sparse in comparison to some other dialects of French—has been receiving more and more attention as of late. Beginning with several master's and doctoral theses in the early and mid-twentieth century (see e.g. Chaudoir, 1938; Guilbeau, 1936; Jeansonne, 1938; Montgomery, 1946; Olivier, 1937), there exists an ever-growing interest in the study of this dialect. Ignoring the more anthropological studies focusing on Cajun music, cuisine, etc., there are a number of articles and books describing, with more or less care and meticulousness, the phonology, morphology, and syntax of CF. Some even tackle issues such as language shift, code-switching and borrowing, and various ongoing linguistic changes as the population of CF speakers continues to diminish. While these studies do not directly correlate to my research topic, many of them nonetheless offer valuable information on both the CF speech community at large as well as the numerous peculiarities of this dialect. This information is undoubtedly useful in understanding the results of my sociolinguistic study.

There have been a number of theses and dissertations written about CF, especially by graduate students at Louisiana State University. The varieties of French spoken throughout south Louisiana began receiving considerable academic attention beginning in the 1930s and 1940s. These studies (Chaudoir, 1938; Guilbeau, 1936; Jeansonne, 1938; Montgomery, 1946; Olivier, 1937), written under the direction of Professor H.A. Major, primarily document grammatical and lexical aspects of CF spoken in different communities. Each of the above-mentioned authors focuses on a single parish as his or her point of reference for documenting CF. While linguistic terms like assibilation and affrication are rarely if ever mentioned, the extensive lists of words

and their respective pronunciations (typically transcribed in some version of the IPA) provide us with a great level of insight into the presence or absence of these features during that time period. I discuss the above-mentioned researchers' specific references to assibilation and affrication in CF in Chapter 3, where I outline the specific linguistic studies of these features. Before this, it is sufficient to note that these early, lexically oriented academic studies represent some of the first descriptive works done on CF.

Two of the most recent dissertations on CF include those by Carole Salmon (2007) and Sybille Noetzel (2007) and were also completed at LSU. Both of these dissertations offer current insight into the state of CF and the changes occurring within the dialect. With respect to Salmon, her exploration of vowel variation in CF has proven most enlightening, as it is an example of a study of four generations of Cajun speakers. Here, Salmon examined the variation between vowels such as [o], [u], and [ɔ] in various phonetic contexts (e.g. in front of nasals [n] or [m] or liquids [r] and [l]). Her work, which is similarly based on data from the Dubois Corpus, provided for me not only a detailed look at the appropriate methodological approaches required for this type of phonetic research but also served as a beginning point in locating relevant sources to my study. Furthermore, Salmon's study documents the effect of specific sociolinguistic factors on language maintenance as well as language change in CF. As one example, she established that the age factor is particularly relevant as there were strong correlations in phonetic preferences between certain generations of her speakers that could not be explained merely by geographic location or linguistic factors (Salmon, 2007, p. 169).

Noetzel's study of locative preposition variation in CF is also based on the Dubois Corpus and has similarly provided me with a range of useful knowledge used in my own study. Noetzel examined, for example, the variation between locative prepositions such as *à* and *dans*

before cities, states, and countries. Here Noetzel, like Salmon, also concludes that one must consider certain sociolinguistic factors when examining CF. Likewise in her study age is extremely important when explaining the linguistic behaviors of her sample. Both of these works are invaluable to my current study for three reasons: 1) they represent some of the most current sociolinguistic scholarship on CF, and 2) they both denote the importance of considering both linguistic and social factors when analyzing this particular dialect, and 3) they demonstrate empirical studies of several CF speech communities.

With respect to the current study of CF, Dubois is perhaps one of the most prolific sociolinguists. Her work documents not only her methodological approach to the creation of the corpus (Dubois, 1997b; Dubois & Melançon, 1997) but also broaches such areas of study as linguistic attitudes towards the teaching of CF (1997a), code-switching and borrowing in CF (1997a), language shift and attrition (2001, 2005), and the retention of dialectal features in CF (2012). Dubois has also published several works (2003, 2005, 2010) on her study of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Louisiana French epistolary correspondence, which offer an insight into the early stages of French in Louisiana as well as clues to the possible origins of many modern CF linguistic features.

Numerous other linguists from around the world have written on all aspects of the varieties of French spoken in Louisiana. For example, Becky Brown has published articles discussing both the current state of CF in Louisiana as well as the social stigmas and consequences associated with speaking the dialect (1993, 2003). Here, Brown adds to the plethora of other publications that detail the negative linguistic attitudes held by many people towards this particular variety of French and how these attitudes have contributed in part to the decline in the overall number of CF speakers existing today. Brown has also published her work

on code switching and borrowing in CF, examining for example the usage of both English loanwords such as *un trawl* and CF calques like *une compagnie d'huile* (“oil company”) (2003). This study not only examines these two phenomena as they occur in different parts of Acadiana but also draws attention once more to the sentiment that CF is not a singular dialect of French but rather a set of several closely related regional varieties of French clustered together under the umbrella term of CF. Such an idea of linguistic variation is integral to my research, which attempts to draw linguistic distinctions among speakers of CF between those that assibilate and those that affricate.

Sociolinguistic research into the phonetics and phonology of CF is not quite as common as the studies of linguistic attitudes and language shift and change. However, there are several linguistic studies worth noting. In addition to those mentioned previously, others who have written on the phonetics and phonology of CF include Hosea Phillips (1945) and Chantal Lyche (1996). Phillips’ early study of vowel production in Evangeline parish is not extremely detailed, but he does note the presence of assibilation in conjunction with certain vowels. Lyche’s study, seemingly more detailed, focuses on schwa metathesis in CF. She notes the overwhelmingly complex nature of this feature with respect to CF and its frequent appearance in word-initial positions. Her work on metathesis also adds to the literature already discussed expressing the idea that CF is not uniform and has an abundance of variation between the different speech communities of Louisiana.

As outlined in the previous sections of this chapter, despite the extent to which dialect leveling has occurred in Louisiana, geography continues to play a significant role in the linguistic study of CF. While outsiders often view CF as a singular, homogenous entity, this dialect exhibits great phonological, morphological, and syntactic variation throughout south

Louisiana. In recent years, linguists (see e.g., Byers, 1988; Dubois, 1997b; Dubois & Melançon, 1997; Dubois, 2005; Rottet, 2004; Russell, 2010) have attempted to use geography and settlement patterns as a means of not only delineating specific linguistic patterns in CF but to also explain how these variations allude to the origins of certain features.

In one such instance, Rottet (2004) asserts that the usage of the inanimate pronouns *qui* and *quoi* denote two separate types of French brought to Louisiana in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These pronouns, which according to Rottet have rather marked geographic boundaries within the CF community, are both used to denote “what” in English. The question “What are you doing?,” for example, will be said as either *Qui t’après faire* or *Quoi t’après faire* depending on the region. Rottet’s subsequent work here builds on a previous study (Byers, 1988) that denoted a distinct geographic distribution for these two interrogatives. According to Byers, one may divide CF into a southwest/south central variety, which uses *quoi*, and a north/southeast variety, which uses *qui*. Based on these boundaries, Avoyelles and Lafourche belong to the north/southeast variety while Vermilion and St. Landry are part of the southwest/south central variety. Both Rottet and Byers conclude that these two variants stem from two separate settlement patterns, namely, the Acadians (*quoi*) and the French Colonials (*qui*). It is clear then, that my current study should take into account the geographic diversity of those who settled the four parishes of my study.

Other researchers have also drawn linguistic conclusions that are in part based on settlement patterns. Russell (2010) discusses the link between the original settlement of Evangeline Parish and the assimilation found in and around the town of Ville Platte. Here, in attempting to uncover the origins of assimilation in Louisiana, Russell cites the importance of Evangeline Parish’s (and Avoyelles’) creole past (p. 5). Although Avoyelles Parish is not the

focus of his aforementioned study, the brief mention of Avoyelles as sharing a link with Evangeline is worth noting because of the well-documented presence of assibilation there, which I discuss in detail in Chapter 3.

Aside from the articles mentioned above, several other linguists have contributed to the literature focusing on CF. They include Albert Valdman (1997, 1998, 2002, 2005), Michael Picone (1997a, 1997b, 2000, 2005), and Kevin Rottet (1997, 2001, 2004, 2005). Each of these linguists has covered all major areas of linguistic study pertinent to CF, including: phonology, morphology, and syntax. One common thread that runs throughout each of these studies is the acknowledgement that south Louisiana has been in the midst of a vast language shift for some time. The linguistic reality of this region requires that we take into account two key facts when examining the phonetics and phonology of the dialect as I do here: 1) the aging of the most fluent CF speakers and 2) the decline in CF as an everyday, viable means of communication. With the idea of language shift and language death now in mind I turn to an in-depth discussion of the current state of CF in Louisiana, which has seen a massive shift towards monolingual English communities as French ceases to be passed on to the new generations of Cajuns.

1.7 Cajun French Today

The ethnic pride that developed among Cajuns during the second half of the twentieth century, along with the introduction of French into the majority of schools, attempted to serve as a temporary reprieve from the rapid decline of French in the state. However, even with the many organizations devoted to the preservation of CF and the inclusion of French in practically all Louisiana schools in Acadiana, the number of speakers continues to decline as the older speakers of CF slowly disappear. These facts in turn bring us to a pertinent question: how many people still speak CF in Louisiana? This question, however, is not so simple to answer as we are forced

to rely on census data, which because of the way in which questions involving language are often worded, are not always the most accurate.

As of 2010, the U.S. Census shows that there are approximately 138,000 people who purport to speak French at home in Louisiana (American Community Survey, 2012). In the past, however, the accuracy of the census's data has received criticism. Specifically, there is a debate about the accuracy of both the 1990 and 2000 censuses. In order to determine whether or not the most recent number appears more or less accurate, a quick overview of the issues involving the previous two censuses is prudent.

There are clear discrepancies between the census data from 1990 and 2000. A drastic difference in the number of people reporting to identify as Cajun, as well as those claiming to speak French, differs so greatly that many who study CF recognize the errors of the 2000 census. Bernard (2003) explains the conflict between the two censuses, stating that:

General opinion in south Louisiana holds that the 1990 census remains the most accurate measure of the Cajun population, while the 2000 preliminary results are considered, to cite one editorial, "a colossal miscalculation." (p. XXIII)

Bernard's reasoning behind the above statement lies in the fact that the number of people who identified as 'Cajun' experienced "roughly a 90 percent decline" (p. XXIII) between 1990 and 2000. Because of this difference, most people have preferred the numbers from 1990, which showed 261,000 French speakers in Louisiana. This number cannot be construed as entirely accurate either, however. Dubois (1997b) points out that:

The way the language question is formulated...leaves no way to distinguish between the varying degrees of Cajun French fluency, how often it is used, or which of the various types of French is spoken in the home, i.e. Cajun French, Creole French or standard French. It can be hypothesized that the actual number of fluent Cajun French speakers is much smaller than the Census Bureau data indicate. (p. 68)

Following the reasoning of Dubois surrounding the vague nature of the question regarding language on the census, it is safe to assume that there were fewer than 261,000 fluent CF speakers in Louisiana in 1990. The current estimate then of 138,000, appears accurate in that regard. However, without a survey that takes into account a speaker's level of fluency and denotes dialect or variety, such numbers should be viewed with caution.

Taking into account the history of the Cajuns discussed earlier in this chapter, as well as the above conclusion that the number of CF speakers is declining, one must acknowledge that their path has been fraught, at least linguistically, with difficult times. Despite this, Cajuns continued for centuries to preserve their heritage. However, the inevitable truth remains—one aspect of this heritage, namely CF, is disappearing. This does not mean that we cannot gain insight from examining today's CF speakers. In many ways, the exclusively familial nature of the language along with its overtly oral nature, make it an excellent example of language change brought on not only by the overall attrition of speakers but by the numerous sociological factors affecting its speakers. But, it also means that a study of CF cannot put aside the phenomenon of linguistic attrition at work within the CF system. All of which in turn bear an effect and must be considered in my research of assimilation and affrication. I therefore in Chapter 2 turn to the theories behind studying a language undergoing language shift and eventual language death as well as the importance of gender as a sociolinguistic factor.

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE SHIFT AND GENDER

In this chapter, I discuss how I took into account the effects of language shift on a linguistic study of CF phonology. French in Louisiana has—for at least the last one hundred years—been in a state of decline. Because parents and grandparents are not passing on the language to the younger generations with any great frequency, the overall number of CF speakers diminishes each year. Those speakers that do remain also use a reduced or simplified linguistic system due to the language's attrition. Moreover, CF speakers of all generations now use English in most areas of their lives, which results in the language shift and potential language death discussed below. I contend that an understanding of language shift and language death is vital to the eventual analysis of my data. And, it is within the context of this language shift that I can answer a few fundamental questions regarding phonological behavior and, more specifically, the distribution of assibilation and affrication throughout these CF communities. With the support of previous research on the linguistic behavior of languages experiencing language shift, I aim to determine whether or not we can draw a link between the usage rates of assibilation and affrication and the overall attrition of CF among its speakers.

In this chapter I also discuss the importance of gender as a sociolinguistic factor. Gender-specific linguistic behavior, which I confirmed through a preliminary testing of these features among both men and women, led to my decision to focus primarily on the phonology of male CF speakers. As I demonstrate, linguistic studies have long shown that men are more likely than women to use dialectal features and regional variations on a standard or language norm. Through my own research, I show how such gender distinctions apply to CF with regard to my research. I also propose that the occlusives [t] and [d] are the CF norm due to their higher usage among

women, and that assibilation and affrication are vernacular variations of the occlusive. Finally, I hypothesize as to the effects of both language shift and gender on the rate and usage of assibilation and affrication in my sample of CF speakers.

2.1 Language Shift

As I have mentioned previously, Louisiana has never been an exclusively francophone region. There have always existed an abundance of other languages being spoken by numerous cultures. Louisiana's high level of language contact makes its varieties of French interesting linguistic specimens. This contact—or more appropriately the linguistic attitudes brought on by language contact—also represents the cause of the eventual decline of French throughout the region. Even among the most rural CF speech communities in Acadiana, the twentieth century saw the encroachment of English as the language of everyday use. The shift from French to English began to take place after the Civil War, and is visible, for example, in the aforementioned amendment to the Louisiana State Constitution of 1868 that banned French in schools (Louisiana State Constitution of 1868, 2009).

But, the most powerful push towards English came in the twentieth century when the state again outlawed French in schools in 1921. This time, the banning of French had great effect on Louisiana's French speakers. And, it was from this point forward that CF began to truly decline as its speakers increasingly came to view CF in a negative light. In turn, they no longer passed the language down to their children with any great frequency. Because of this shift, CF is in rapid decline, and it is highly probable that the death of this language as a mother tongue will occur in our lifetimes. Elements of CF will undoubtedly continue to exist in Louisiana food, music, and culture, but the absence of a new generation of native speakers all but ensures its death. That is not yet the case, however. And, despite the linguistic attrition occurring among the

majority of CF communities, we can still gain insight into the linguistic structures at play within this dialect.

Cajuns' movement away from CF as the language of their culture towards the use of English represents an excellent example of language shift (and most likely eventually language demise). Language shift, as the name suggests, is the decline of a once strong minority language among its speakers who demonstrate a growing trend of preference for another often times more prestigious language. In the case of CF, language shift denotes the move away from French as an everyday means of communication towards the use of English in all aspects of Cajun life. Older members of the CF community still use the language; however, they tend to restrict their CF usage to the household and do not pass the language on to the younger generations with any great frequency. This decision to not pass on the language has led us to a point where a command of CF is no longer viewed as a necessary part of identifying oneself as Cajun (Dubois & Melançon, 1997). The very opposite is true in fact, as Dubois and Melançon point out, with younger monolingual English Louisianans more likely to self-identify as Cajun than their bilingual parents and grandparents. The notion of a Cajun identity without CF only serves as proof that Cajuns see French as a non-essential attribute of their identity because, otherwise, it would exclude too many of them.

The notion of language shift is by no means new, nor is it specific to the situation occurring in Louisiana. For decades linguists have studied the causes as well as linguistic effects of language shift around the world. One of the first linguists to note the importance of studying the linguistic behavior of not only fluent speakers but also those with limited range in a given language was Nancy Dorian. These "imperfect speakers," as Dorian calls them, help us to understand the simplification process inherent in language shift and language death (1981).

Language attrition also provides us with clues regarding changes at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels triggered by either external or internal factors or both. It is therefore plausible that the patterns and use of assibilation and affrication in CF—a language that continues to attrite both on the whole and at the individual level—are directly linked to the socio-historical situation surrounding its decline. Although, I should note that Salmon (2007) found no such link in her study of vowel production and variation in CF women.

The specific shift from French to English is not unique to Louisiana either. In their study of Ontario French, Mougeon and Beniak (1991) discussed this process. They cite two major identifying markers of language shift:

There is language shift when (1) certain members of the minority community lose productive skills in the minority language or when certain members of that community are not or only minimally transmitted the minority language, and (2) the majority language encroaches in the domains which are the primary determinants of intergenerational language transmission and in which the minority community could exclusively use its language if it so decided. (p. 28)

The current state of CF in Louisiana directly corresponds to both of the criteria outlined above by Mougeon and Beniak. First, as I just mentioned earlier, CF's lack of transmission to the younger generations with any real frequency is well documented (Bernard, 2003; Blyth, 1997; Brasseaux, 1992; Dubois & Melançon, 1997; Rottet, 2001; Valdman, 1997). There is currently no doubt among linguists that CF is in a state of decline both in terms of the generation of new speakers as well as a general decline among those who no longer speak it with any frequency. Second, the use of CF has become so restricted that it is now reduced to mostly only being spoken in the home domain, and even this often only occurs among the oldest members of the family. This type of situation, as Rottet (2001) points out, represents a “gradual language death,” stating that “when children no longer learn a language in the home, it is generally just a matter of time until the last adult speakers have all died, and no native speakers are left” (p. 2). The decline of CF

within the home and among the children embodies perhaps the most substantial sign that CF is in the midst of a language shift and gradual language death.

Despite an ever-increasing interest in language shift, its sociolinguistic causes and contexts as well as its general effect on a language's remaining speakers, there exists to date little empirical data regarding these effects at the phonological level. This lack of evidence leaves unanswered several questions concerning the phonological effects of language shift: How does language shift affect the phonology of an individual speaker? Are there correlating patterns that one can discern between a speaker's level of fluency and their phonological process? And finally, does the phonology of the majority language have an effect on the phonology of the minority variety? Bullock and Gerfen's (2004a, 2004b, 2005) work on phonological attrition in the North American dialect of French spoken in Frenchville, Pennsylvania offers insight into these questions. In one of their studies (2004a), they used recordings of Frenchville French speakers to investigate the replacement of the French vowels [ø] and [œ] with the English rhoticized schwa [ə] as well as the convergence of the French rhotics with the American English /r/. Bullock and Gerfen found that while the French vowels were replaced with the English rhoticized schwa in virtually all contexts, the French rhotics were not overtaken by the English approximation. These results led them to conclude that the phonological effects of a majority language on the attriting variety are at best unpredictable.

While this is merely one example of the phonological effects of language shift on a variety of French in North America, these results are intriguing. Relating these findings to my own research, the near total absence of [ts] and [dz] in English, along with the high frequency of [tʃ] and [dʒ], seems to indicate that CF speakers could favor affrication while disfavoring assibilation. In other words, as English encroaches more and more on CF, affrication could

become more frequent than before to the detriment of the assibilated pronunciation. Since Bullock and Gerfen determined that a majority language's influence is unpredictable at the phonological level, such a hypothesis is theoretically possible in CF.

The notion of language shift is important to the study of CF for two primary reasons. First, it offers us an opportunity to document the last stages of a language with the intention of preserving as much of it as possible before there are not enough speakers for any more studies to be done. In the case of my study of assibilation and affrication, I have the unique opportunity to determine how a set of phonological variants behaves among speakers of various ages. While the linguistic behavior of speakers varies according to age and language situation regardless of shift or death, the decline in linguistic ability and fluency add another layer to the equation. It thus becomes possible to determine whether or not attrition plays a role in the behavior of the speakers. Specifically, in languages undergoing shift or death, age doubly functions as both a social factor and as an indicator of speaker fluency.

Secondly, the study of a language undergoing language shift is also interesting because of the unique ways in which such a language continues to evolve despite its decline. Rottet (2001), in his study of language loss in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, used the work of Dorian (1981) to mark the distinctive nature of studying language shift. Dorian's work on Scottish Gaelic led her to the general conclusion that:

Sociolinguistic factors, rather than purely linguistic features, distinguish change in dying languages from change in 'healthy' languages. The types of change in formal language structure are not notably different from those well established in the study of language change in general. But the timespan for change seems to be compressed and the amount of change seems relatively large. (Dorian, 1981, p. 154)

Following Dorian's reasoning here, CF is well suited for a study such as mine. Due to the increased speed at which it evolves, I should be able to note any changes in the rates of

assibilation or affrication between my three generations—changes which may have taken much longer to occur in a “healthy” language.

On a more individual scale, there is another aspect of language shift and language loss that could have an impact on my current research. This aspect lies in the level to which my selected speakers effectively learned CF. A speaker’s level of fluency is particularly important among the young generation, who typically use CF less often and with fewer people than the old speakers. Regarding the fluency of current CF speakers, Blyth (1997) points out that:

It is important to distinguish language attrition from imperfect learning, since both result in lack of fluency. Language attrition refers to the gradual loss of a skill that at one time had been fully acquired...Imperfect learning refers to the partial acquisition of a skill characteristic of second-language learning. It is usually attributed to lack of adequate exposure to the obsolescing language. (p. 35)

In essence, when working with language shift, one must categorize speakers who exhibit some level of loss as either experiencing attrition—most likely due to lack of use—or as having never properly acquired the grammar of the language in the first place. In terms of the men included in my study, all speakers from all three generations are considered fluent CF speakers. However, I did notice varying levels of fluency among them during the codification of my variants. Dubois, whose Linguistic Ability and Background Index and Market Dialect Index quantified fluency among CF speakers, has previously noted this variation in the corpus (see e.g., Dubois, et al., 1995; Dubois, 1997a; Dubois 1997b; Dubois, 1998; Dubois & Noetzel, 2005).

These differences in fluency most often arose among the youngest speakers from the corpus. For these speakers, I was able to fairly easily hypothesize about their comfort with speaking French by merely listening to the rate at which they spoke and the range of vocabulary that they used. One speaker in particular, I recall, showed clear signs of what I would consider language attrition. He often repeated phrases and utterances that seemed fixed rather than

spontaneous, and there were even instances of an “ungrammatical” use of words. This speaker systematically used the verb *travailler* (“to work”) in lieu of *voyager* (“to travel”), potentially because of the phonetic similarity between *travailler* and *travel*.

If we return to Blyth’s statement above then, it is not necessarily accurate to state that young speakers, who as a generation are seemingly less fluent than their older counterparts, are experiencing language attrition on an individual basis. Rather, they represent one of the final stages of language shift in which the youngest speakers never fully learned the language and thus have a limited command of it. The incomplete learning of CF can therefore affect my young speakers in two ways: 1) they will make phonological “errors” or innovations because they never fully learned the rules of CF, or 2) they will mimic almost exactly the old speakers because they perceive that to be the most correct form of CF. In either instance, it is clear that we must consider the effects language shift when examining CF.

2.2 Studies of Gender

The majority of my study at hand focuses on the /t,d/ variation of male CF speakers. I have based this decision on two criteria: 1) the vast amount of literature supporting the theory that men and women have distinctly different linguistic patterns regarding their use of dialectal features, and 2) a pilot test of 24 CF speakers (12 men, 12 women) that showed lower rates of assibilation and affrication in women than in their male counterparts. Before delving into the results of this pilot test, I wish to first review the existing literature on the sociolinguistic gender pattern.

The use of gender as a social constraint has long been a part of sociolinguistic study. In particular, the role of gender in language use has received considerable attention from Labov (2001) and other linguists over the past several decades. Labov (2001) states, for instance, that:

Gender plays a crucial role...no one can deny that husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, are involved in intimate communication in everyday life. Yet gender is a powerful differentiating factor in almost every case of stable social stratification and change in progress that has been studied. (p. 262)

Labov supports his above assertion noting the “crucial” role of gender by citing several sociolinguistic studies that demonstrate the divergent linguistic behaviors of men and women. He notes Macaulay’s results (1978), for instance, in which he found that young Glaswegian men used stigmatized, dialectal vowels more than young women from the same community. Labov also highlights gender-divergent behavior outside the realm of English. He notes the work of Alba (1990) and López (1983), who found that Spanish-speaking women throughout Latin America typically behaved more conservatively in their language use than did the men.

According to these studies, men are more likely to maintain and use linguistic and phonological regionalisms than women. Women, on the other hand, tend to resolve their linguistic particularities by adopting what they consider to be the societal norm or prestige form of a given language or dialect. This societal norm may stem from an external factor or from within the speech community itself. To summarize this point, Labov (2001) concludes that:

Perhaps the broadest and most widely instantiated sociolinguistic generalization concerns the careful behavior of women...It can be stated as *Principle 2, the linguistic conformity of women: For stable sociolinguistic variables, women show a lower rate of stigmatized variants and a higher rate of prestige variants than men.* (p. 266)

I found other claims similar Labov’s principle, which state that women favor prestige language forms more than their male counterparts. Fasold (1990), for example, expounds upon the role of gender, claiming “male speakers are often found to use socially disfavored variants of sociolinguistic variables while women tend to avoid these in favor of socially more favored variants” (p. 92). The use of these disfavored variants is what Fasold calls the *sociolinguistic*

gender pattern, which he claims to be crucial in any sociolinguistic study. Fasold's pattern thus appears to be virtually one and the same with Labov's principle.

Recent studies have also confirmed the theories asserting gender as an important social factor to be considered in sociolinguistic studies. Orozco (2010) found that gender plays a definitive role in the expression of nominal possession among Costeño Spanish speakers. Here, he notes that "Colombians fall within the established patterns of sociolinguistic behavior. That is, women favor the use of the more 'conservative' variant" (p. 212). Orozco's results, coupled with those of the other studies cited above, led me to two crucial questions concerning my own work here: 1) do CF men and women also behave differently in their /t/ and /d/ production, thus demonstrating this sociolinguistic gender pattern? And, 2) what would said differences imply in terms of prestige form(s) and stigmatized variant(s) in CF?

To answer these two questions, I conducted a pilot study of /t,d/ variation in 24 CF speakers: 12 men and 12 women. There were two primary goals of this preliminary study: 1) to determine whether or not women exhibit use of assibilation and affrication at a similar, higher, or lower rate than their male counterparts, and 2) to determine what these results can tell us about which of my three variants is the prestige form and which ones are dialectal. If, for example, one or more variants are found in higher numbers among women than men, we can argue that this feature is the CF prestige form, and its usage among men is thus lower because men typically favor dialectal or stigmatized variants. To test this possibility, I selected 12 women CF speakers: three from each of the four parishes. Within each parish, I chose one speaker from each of the three generations. Table 2.1 below shows the distribution of /t/ and /d/ according to my three variants among these 12 female speakers.

Table 2.1. Distribution of three variants among CF women speakers.

Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
1395 (85%)	196 (12%)	43 (3%)
		Total
		1634

The “standard” pronunciation of /t/ and /d/ as occlusives is overwhelmingly the preferred variant among these 12 women, at 85%. Assibilation, while higher than affrication at 12% (versus 3% for the latter), can be described as infrequent at best. Furthermore, I should note that of the 43 tokens of affrication, all but seven of them were repetitions of one word: *cadien* [kadʒɛ̃] (“Cajun”). I later indicate in Chapter 3 that *cadien* is an example of lexicalization and independent of the affrication process occurring in other situations. In sum, these results demonstrate that women CF speakers prefer the occlusive variant and use assibilation and affrication at extremely low rates. Following the logic of Labov, Fasold, and the other aforementioned linguists, it seems then that the occlusive could possibly be the CF prestige form of /t/ and /d/.

To test such a theory, I compared the results above with an equal sample of male speakers. For this sub-sample, I selected 12 CF men (3 from each parish and 4 from each generation, as with the women) to compare their use of the three variants. Table 2.2 below depicts the results for these 12 men along with the previous results for the women.

Table 2.2. Comparison of three variants between CF men and women speakers.

	Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
Men	1122 (63%)	547 (31%)	106 (6%)
Women	1395 (85%)	196 (12%)	43 (3%)
		Total	3409

Immediately striking is the fact that the rate at which men use the occlusive is 20% lower than that of the women. Simultaneously, at 31%, men also show a higher rate of assibilation than do the women (12%). While there is not much difference between the percentages of affrication for the men (6%) and women (3%), I hypothesize that this is due to the overall low number of tokens, and that I require a larger sample to make any sound judgments about this variant. It is interesting to note, however, that much like the tokens of affrication for the women, the men's affrication tokens shown in Table 2.2 above also primarily consist of affricated *cadien*.

Regardless of the similarly low use of affrication, these 12 men nevertheless demonstrate greater variation between the variants than do the women. Based on these stark contrasts between men and women here and the high rate of one variant among the women, I can indeed propose the following: *the occlusive variant is the prestige form while assibilation and affrication are dialectal features of CF*. Given the amount of research that has already been conducted on the role of gender, and the above results from my pilot study demonstrating the applicability of the gender pattern to CF, I chose to focus the remainder of my work solely on men. To further support this decision, I turned to other sociolinguistic studies of French (including CF) as well as Cajun English so as to see whether or not linguists have similarly noted the gender pattern.

In their research into the lexical borrowing patterns of Ottawa French, Mougeon and Beniak (1991) found that women were more likely than men to use the conjunction *ça fait que* (“so”) over the English loan word *so* (p. 203). Likewise in their next study dealing with the preference among speakers between the conjunctions *ça fait que* and *alors* (“so”) they found that women were more likely to use the latter than men. As they explained, this was “an understandable finding considering that *ça fait que*, like *so*, is mainly a feature of working-class speech” and accordingly reflects a dialectal form while *alors* is the standard, prestige form (p. 209).

In regards to CF specifically, the data from Rottet’s (2001) research indicate clear differences between the linguistic behavior of men and women. In nearly every category that he tested, his data show a clear preference among women for what he delineated as the CF norm. His data show, for example, that women are more likely than men to use *je* (“I”) over *mon je* (“Me I”) for the first person singular pronoun and *on* over *nous-autres on/nous-autres/nous* for the first person plural pronoun “we.”

Research involving speakers from the Dubois corpus also supports the notion of male preference for non-prestigious language variants. Dubois and Horvath (1998), in their study of Cajun Vernacular English (CVE), noted differences between men and women with respect to the use of interdental fricatives. They found that while women were more likely than men to use these interdental fricatives (a dialectal feature of CVE) in closed networks, the women strongly disfavored their use in open networks (p. 254). The men of their study, however, showed the same favor toward the fricatives regardless of the network in which they were speaking. These results thus reinforce the notion that men and women have different linguistic behaviors. It also demonstrates a more subtle aspect of the gender pattern, which notes that women appear to have

a linguistic cognizance of what the specific prestige forms are and when to favor or disfavor their use. Despite this work on speakers from the Dubois corpus regarding CVE, my study represents the first to examine the gender pattern in the CF interviews from the corpus.

Based on all of these studies (including my own), we know then that gender affects the way in which one uses language: men are more likely than women to use non-standard features. Linguists have shown this to be true in a host of languages and dialects, including those in Louisiana. But what motivates this gender-specific behavior? In order to discover the reasons behind why gender affects language use, we must approach the topic from a somewhat anthropological point of view. From there, we see that it is the gender roles of a society, rather than the physical sex of a person, which aid in the creation of the gender pattern. Because men and women have long had rather different societal roles, their approach to language use diverges from one another. As Trudgill (1983) explains:

Women are more closely involved with child-rearing and the transmission of culture, and are therefore more aware of the importance, for their children, of the acquisition of (prestige) norms. The social position of women in our society has traditionally been less secure than that of men. It may be, therefore, that it has been more necessary for women to secure and signal their social status linguistically. (p. 167)

Trudgill's explanation highlights two separate reasons for which women often prefer more conservative language forms: 1) their function as mothers/caregivers and the ensuing transmission of culture from mother to child, and 2) women's historically insecure societal role, which led to the use of language as signaling or advancing one's status. Trudgill's two explanations here directly apply, in my opinion, to the CF speech communities of Louisiana. Historically speaking, CF culture has stipulated very specific and different societal roles for men and women. Unsurprisingly, women tended to the home and raised the children while men worked outside of the home. Conventional forms of employment included farming, fishing,

trapping, welding, etc. Men have traditionally dominated each of these areas, which in turn created gender-specific networks and promoted divergent language forms between the sexes. In direct response to the second part of Trudgill's explanation, if assimilation and affrication are (as I have stated) the non-prestigious forms, women would likely forego the use of these forms in preference of others that they might be able to use to secure and signal their social status.

The realm of leisure activities is also a determiner in language use. Men and women tend to remain separated not only in terms of work but in their leisure activities as well; and their language reflects this separation (Fasold, 1990). Nowhere is this separation more visible than in Cajun communities, where traditional men's activities include hunting, fishing, and sports. Women do not as often take part in such activities. Instead women have typically preferred activities like cooking, gardening, or quilting. It should be noted, however, that such statements are about the traditional roles of men and women in CF society, and should not be construed as applying to every CF speaker. But, over the course of my coding, I did notice that virtually every one of the male speakers in my study mentioned gender-separated leisure activities (most often hunting) as a vital part of their social lives as well as acknowledged this gender separation in their discussion of the activity. It seems logical therefore that Trudgill's notion of women using language to signify and improve upon social status would directly apply to CF speakers as well. At the same time, women—seemingly more aware of their language production—would use more favorable language patterns than their male counterparts.

Language shift, which I discussed at the beginning of this chapter, also appears to have some correlation to the gender pattern. Previous research documents female CF speakers abandoning the French language altogether in favor of English. As Rottet, who cites Larouche's identification (1981) of women CF speakers as "agents of assimilation," explains:

Women...prefer not to speak French to their children to avoid passing on a stigma to them. Men, on the other hand, speak it as often as possible at work and with friends, but tend to speak English at home for the same reason as their wives. (Rottet, 2001, pp. 86–87)

Cajun women are therefore known to show a strong awareness of the stigmas attached to certain aspects of language use as well as show a general preference to abandon the language altogether. As such, CF women's awareness of the stigma of English speaks not only to the second portion of Trudgill's explanation but also to the problem of language shift. In a sense, the CF women's conformity to the gender pattern serves as a partial motivator for the overall shift in Louisiana's CF communities from French to English. The correlation between the theories of gender and those of language shift lead me now to my hypotheses regarding how they directly affect my study of /t,d/ variation in CF.

2.3 Hypothesis

The primary aim of my study is to determine whether or not assimilation and/or affrication play a significant role in the phonology of modern CF. I further argue that these variants are not the norm in CF and that we find the highest use of them among male speakers. The literature outlined above on language shift allows for a plethora of hypotheses concerning these features. I conclude that there are two primary hypotheses deserving attention in my eventual analysis. The first of these concerns the relationship between phonology and language shift. Bullock and Gerfen (2004a) noted an unpredictable correlation between the phonology of Frenchville French speakers and language shift. It is still unclear, however, whether or not this is restricted to their specific study or symptomatic of phonology and language shift as a whole. Here, a higher rate of affrication than assimilation would then indicate that this variant has some sort of external development due to the influence of the majority language (i.e. English) on CF phonology.

In addition gender and language shift, I further hypothesize that location and age are significant to the usage of these variants in CF. Geographic location may indeed play a role in the presence or absence of assibilation and affrication, as the longtime isolation of many CF communities no doubt produced variation restricted to a particular region. But, I suspect variation also exists among my generations within each parish and that this variation could represent a discernible element of language shift at the phonological level. To test such a hypothesis, I must examine the distribution of assibilation and affrication among each generation both at the dialectal level (all four parishes combined) and speech community level (individual parishes).

My second hypothesis about the impact of language shift on assibilation and affrication concerns the specific behavior of my young generation of CF speakers. As Blyth (1997) notes, within the realm of language shift also lies the element of imperfect learning. This is not an example of change due to the language attrition of a speaker who once had a command of the language. It is instead the depiction of a speaker whose knowledge of the language's grammar is and has always been limited from the start. My initial observation during the coding process was that the youngest speakers showed a weaker overall fluency in CF than their older counterparts, and that this perceived weakness is due to what Blyth labels as imperfect learning. Such an observation then raises the question: is a lower rate of assibilation or affrication in the young (as compared to that of the old) proof that language shift is acting as an agent of phonological change? If so, a lower rate of either variant in the young would, in effect, depict a sort of phonological convergence that does not exist in the more fluent speech of the older generations. But, if such is not the case, then Blyth's 'imperfect learning' cannot be credited as the cause of

phonological change in CF, and it will instead be a case of language contrast between the generations.

CHAPTER 3

CADZIEN OU CADJIN?

What are the articulatory processes involved in assibilation and affrication? And how do they differ from one another? These are the questions that I answer in the proceeding chapter. Some linguists have historically used the terms assibilation and affrication interchangeably while others have not. This often has created confusion as to what the distinctions actually are between the two. By outlining the literature already written on both assibilation and affrication, I am able to construct my own definitions that distinguish these features from one another. At the same time, these definitions also set up the parameters for the overall methodology of my study, allowing me to draw a direct link between assibilation and affrication in CF. I then rely on my definitions for the remainder of my study.

Researchers have paid relatively little attention, for the most part, to both assibilation and affrication in CF. Furthermore, while these features have sometimes independently been addressed by linguists, I am the first to simultaneously explore both in CF. I therefore begin by exploring these features in other varieties of French, particularly Québécois French (henceforth, QF) and Acadian French (AF). Researchers of French in North America have published numerous works outlining the usages, rates, and, even to some degree, origins of assibilation and affrication in these Canadian dialects. Exploring this information thus allows me to determine the likely origins of assibilation and affrication in CF. And, from this point forward, all of the background information relevant to my study will have been set in place.

3.1 Linguistic Approaches to Assibilation and Affrication

Both assibilation and affrication are phonetic processes that are not restricted to the French language. Linguists have provided typologies of these features and studies noting their

presence in various languages and dialects around the world. I have decided here to treat them as completely separate entities for three reasons. First, while similar in their processes, assibilation and affrication result in separate affricate sets: /ts/ and /dz/ for assibilation, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ for affrication. Secondly, as I demonstrate in Chapter 5, these features behave independently of one another. Treating them separately therefore prevents any unintended confusion between the two. Finally, many linguists have traditionally used these terms either interchangeably or they have solely used ‘affrication’ to refer to all types of affricate use, which creates an understandable amount of confusion in a study such as this where I am treating both types.

With respect to assibilation, *Towards a Typology of Stop Assibilation* (2006) by Hall and Hamann serves as one of the most detailed descriptions of the phenomenon. They define assibilation as a “[process] that convert[s] a (coronal) stop to a sibilant affricate or fricative before high vocoids, e.g., /t/ is realized as [ts]...before /i/” (p. 1195). Hall and Hamann’s typology, while detailed, only furthers the confusion between the terms assibilation and affrication. After their above definition, they state that there are three main types of assibilation: (1) spirantization, in which /t/ is realized as /s/⁷, (2) affrication, whereby /t/ is realized as /ts/, and (3) posteriorization, in which /t/ becomes /tʃ/ (p. 1997). Such delineations are problematic in the case of my current study, however. Their second type, which they call ‘affrication,’ is actually what I will come to refer to as ‘assibilation.’ Hall and Hamann’s notion of assibilation is incomplete therefore and not capable of serving as the primary definition used in my study.

⁷ The use of the term ‘spirantization’ here by Hall and Hamann differs from its typical use in reference to CF, where it describes the process by which the fricatives /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are pronounced as /h/ by certain speakers primarily located in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes. For information on this feature, see Valdman (1997), Papen and Rottet (1997), Picone and Valdman (2005), Dubois, Salmon and Noetzel (2006).

Hyunsoon Kim's 2001 article, *A phonetically based account of phonological stop assibilation*, proposes a similar definition for assibilation as that proposed by Hall and Hamann.

Kim states that:

Phonological assibilation—the creation of sibilants (affricates and/or fricatives) from non-sibilant plosives—is analyzed as having its phonetic origin in the brief period of turbulence which occurs at the release of a plosive into a high vocoid. (p. 81)

This definition serves as a prime example of the articulatory process involved in producing assibilation by describing the manner in which stops such as /t/ or /d/ are transformed into the affricates /ts/ and /dz/. Kim also notes the importance of a high vocoid in this production, stating that assibilation occurs, presumably, only before these vowels. This information helps to serve as the foundation for my own proposed definition of assibilation.

In terms of the specific sounds involved in the assibilation process, Clements (1999) also echoes the necessity of the high vocoids /i/ and /y/ in his previous work surrounding assibilation. He states that assibilation—or affrication for that matter, as his study simultaneously encompasses both—cannot exist without the presence of a high vocoid. The reason for this, Clements posits, lies in the narrowness of the stricture when a stop precedes a high vowel such as /i/. He states:

Just after the t-release, the stricture is sufficiently narrow to generate turbulent airflow. Such turbulence may have spectral properties similar to those of a palatalized coronal fricative, and if sufficiently prolonged can be interpreted as a feature of the consonant itself. (p. 287)

According to Clements, this narrow stricture serves as the primary reason for which assibilation (and affrication) only occurs before high vocoids. He goes on to state as well that when one looks at the stricture of /t/ before other vowels, such as /e/, the created turbulence is too short to cause appearance of consonant-vowel merging (p. 287). While Clements' description of assibilation can in no way fully serve as a definition of the process being explored here, his

explanation of the process serves as important background information on the nature of the overall process involved.

Although the above-mentioned descriptions of assibilation serve to further our understanding of the phenomenon and its overall process, they fail to provide sufficient information so as to fully differentiate assibilation from other similar processes such as affrication or palatalization. I nevertheless use these works to build my own definition of assibilation as a feature independent from any other. I propose then that: *assibilation is the process by which the stops /t/ and /d/, when preceding the high vowels /i/ or /y/, create sufficient stricture so as to produce the affricates /ts/ and /dz/*. In addition to these high vowels, I also assert that *assibilation may occur when the stops /t/ and /d/ precede the semi-vowel /j/*. This definition, while taking into account the work done by Hall and Hamann, Kim, and Clements, also ensures that assibilation is a feature distinct from any other.

One might ask what then is affrication? The works cited above do offer some insight—although not much—into the distinctions between assibilation and affrication. Hall and Hamann (2006), for example, in their typology of assibilation, label affrication as “posteriorization,” a process by which /t/ becomes /tʃ/ (p. 1997). Their brief mention only partially explains affrication as a process and does not even go so far as to discuss the affrication of /d/. Furthermore, their use of the term *posteriorization* throws another term into the discussion and adds to the confusion as to the exact definition of affrication.

My own definition for affrication, which is independent of any superfluous terms, states that: *affrication is the process by which the stops /t/ and /d/, when preceding the high vowels /i/ or /y/ or the semi-vowel /j/, produce the affricates /tʃ/ or /dʒ/*. Although identical to assibilation in

terms of its general process, affrication produces a distinct set of affricates. We can thus fully differentiate between the two without any unnecessary reliance on the definitions of others.

There exists another type of affrication in CF, which is the affrication, or palatalization, of the velar consonants /k/ and /g/—which in turn results in the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/—also occasionally appears in CF. This type of affrication has been documented in CF by Dubois (2005, 2006) and in AF by Flikeid (1984, 1997). Flikeid notes that palatalization in AF is “systematic” (1997, p. 265). Thus, words such as *quinze* and *gueule* are realized as [tʃɛz] and [dʒœl], respectively. I have chosen to exclude this type of affrication from my study for one principle reason: the palatalization of /k/ and /g/ is an entirely different process than that which occurs when the dental consonants /t/ and /d/ are assibilated or affricated. The assibilation and affrication of /t/ and /d/ is due to the narrowing stricture produced when they are followed by a high vocoid. This is not the case with /k/ and /g/, and it would therefore be impossible to make any comparisons between assibilation and this type of affrication.

In addition to these affricates produced through palatalization, there are also myriad English borrowings in CF that exhibit affrication as well. Other borrowings come from the various Amerindian languages found in Louisiana. One of the most common examples of this is the CF word *tchoque* (“blackbird,” pronounced [tʃak]). Often times these words are easily recognizable in dictionaries due to the author’s decision to orthographically represent the affricate as ‘tch.’ The most recent and also most comprehensive CF dictionary, *Dictionary of Louisiana French: As Spoken in Cajun, Creole, and American Indian Communities* (Valdman et al., 2009), uses this orthography. There are also borrowings from English that appeared often during the coding of my speakers. Without a doubt the most common of these was the word *job* (pronounced [dʒab]). So as to ensure that my results are not skewed by these borrowings either

of Amerindian or English origin, which are not the result of the articulatory processes for assibilation and affrication that I outlined earlier, I have chosen to exclude such examples. Thus, I am only considering French words that exhibit the affrication of the dental consonants /t/ and /d/ before either one of the high vocoids /i/ or /y/ or their approximant counterparts /j/ or /ɥ/. This ensures that the rules by which I code both assibilation and affrication remain consistent with one another.

To demonstrate the applicability of my definitions of assibilation and affrication, I turn to Table 3.1 below, which provides examples in French of these two phenomena. In addition to assibilation and affrication, I also include the same sets of words pronounced with the use of the ‘standard’ occlusives. This occlusive pronunciation, which represents the third variant in my study, is typically considered the norm, while assibilation and affrication are considered dialectal features.

Table 3.1. Examples of occlusive, assibilation, and affrication pronunciations in French.

Word in French	English Gloss	Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
petit	<i>little</i>	[piti]	[pitsi]	[pitʃi]
dur	<i>hard</i>	[dyχ]	[dzyr]	[dʒyr]
moitié	<i>half</i>	[mwatje]	[mwatsje]	[mwatʃje]
diable	<i>devil</i>	[djablə]	[dzjablə]	[dʒjablə]

As Table 3.1 demonstrates, assibilation and affrication are similar in terms of the environment in which they may occur, but their realization remains different. They may therefore only be

considered together in terms of the overall process. Otherwise, we should consider them as separate entities requiring independent treatment.

3.2 Assibilation in French

When broaching the subject of assibilation in French—and more specifically its involvement in the phonology of CF—it is insightful to begin by exploring answers to two fundamental questions: 1) where do we find high rates of assibilation in French?, and 2) how does this feature serve as a marker of these particular dialects? As I soon demonstrate, one most often and most closely associates assibilation with QF. However, this dialect is not the only one in which we find it. At the same time, if we are to understand the role of assibilation in CF we must also consider its origins in French. What does the literature offer in terms of explanations as to when assibilation became a noticeable feature of certain French dialects, and how does this eventually help to explain its presence or absence in CF? It is my hope that a brief exploration of the origins of assibilation in French helps in the forthcoming analysis of my data.

3.2.1 Assibilation as a Marker of Dialect

Most of the research surrounding assibilation in French has been concerned with the variety spoken in Quebec⁸. Grammarians, linguists, and lexicographers have long documented assibilation as a stable feature of this variety of French. Because of this, there is much literature on both the origin of assibilation as well as its place in the QF phonetic system. Of particular importance is Denis Dumas' book (1987), *Nos façons de parler: Les prononciations en français québécois*, where he devotes an entire chapter to assibilation. Here, Dumas notes not only the

⁸ While the ambiguity surrounding the terms used for assibilation is less often a problem in studies devoted to French than in those of other languages, it does occur from time to time. In those instances in which one finds a different term used for assibilation, I have made the appropriate substitution so as to remain consistent with my definition of the feature and avoid any possible confusion.

frequency with which one hears assibilation in QF but also provides several examples showing the phonetic changes taking place:

En effet, n'importe qui peut observer, puis ensuite vérifier, que *t* ne fait **ts** et *d* ne fait **dz** que quand ils sont immédiatement suivis de la voyelle *i* ou de la voyelle *u*, par exemple dans des mots comme *petit*, *tulipe*, *dimanche*, *endurer*, qui deviennent ainsi **petsit**, **tsulipe**, **dzimanche**, **endzurer**⁹. (Dumas, 1987, p. 1)

Dumas' above assertion serves two purposes. First, it represents support for my definition of assibilation. Second, it provides us with further examples of assibilation in French. From these examples it also becomes evident that the presence of assibilation is not deterred by syllable position. We find examples of word-initial (**dzimanche**), word-middle (**endzurer**) and word-final (**petsit**) assibilation. The relevance of the location of assibilation becomes clear in the following chapter where I outline the linguistic factors taken into consideration in my study. Dumas (1987) goes on to reflect upon the relative unimportance of syllable position, stating that:

C'est sans importance : la consonne peut bien appartenir à un morceau du mot et la voyelle suivante à un autre, le phénomène se produira quand même à 100%, pourvu simplement que tout se joue à l'intérieur des limites du même mot¹⁰. (p. 3)

Due to the above statement, it seems clear that one can state with certainty that, aside from the restrictions of dental consonant + high vowel, assibilation can and will freely occur within a single word without regard to syllable position in QF. Since there exists to date no such research on assibilation in CF, however, it remains to be seen whether such a claim holds true for the Louisiana variety. For this reason, I have chosen to include syllable position as one of my key linguistic factors to be investigated during my analysis.

⁹ Indeed, anyone can observe, then verify, that *t* only produces **ts** and *d* only produces **dz** when they are immediately followed by the vowel *i* or the vowel *u*, for example in words like *petit*, *tulipe*, *dimanche*, *endurer*, which then become **petsit**, **tsulipe**, **dzimanche**, **endzurer**.

¹⁰ It is without importance: the consonant can easily belong to one part of the word and the following vowel to another, the phenomenon will nevertheless occur at 100%, simply provided that everything takes place within the interior limits of the same word.

Aside from Dumas, numerous other linguists and researchers have commented on the appearance of assibilation in QF. Claude Poirier begins his article (2009), “L’assibilation des occlusives /t/ et /d/ au Québec: le point sur la question,” with a similar definition of assibilation to that of Dumas. Poirier also adds that it is possible not only before the high vowels /i/ and /y/ but also between [t/d] and either the palatal semi-vowel /j/ or the labio-palatal semi-vowel /ɥ/ (2009). Examples of this may include *tiède* (“warm”) assibilated as [tsjɛd] and *réduire* (“to reduce”) as [redzɥir]. The appearance of assibilation in conjunction with these approximants is not surprising given the close relationship in terms of the acoustic and articulatory properties between these particular glides and the high vowels. I felt it necessary therefore to include the semi-vowel in my definition of assibilation¹¹.

In addition to his definition of assibilation, Poirier offers several other insights into the use of this trait in Quebec and how it functions within the QF phonetic system. For example, Poirier notes that assibilation is not only categorical within a word but also optional between a word ending in /t/ or /d/ when the following word begins with one of the high vowels or approximants (Poirier, 2009). To support this claim, he cites the example of *grande île*, which is sometimes heard as [gɛ̃ɑdzɪl]. In light of this possibility, I did take into account the possibility of assibilation across word boundaries when coding the CF speakers in my study. However, I did not find enough instances so as to allow me to determine with any certainty whether or not assibilation across word boundaries in CF exhibits the same tendencies as in QF. While I am at this time uncertain as to why I noted such a small number of tokens for this type of assibilation, I can hypothesize that it is due to two factors. First, the use of a word ending in one of the dental consonants followed by a word beginning with a high vowel is relatively rare. Second, I

¹¹ I did not include the semi-vowel /ɥ/ in my definition for either assibilation or affrication because it is not part of the CF phonetic system (Fagyal, Kibbee, & Jenkins, 2006). CF speakers prefer the semi-vowel /w/, and I found no evidence of assibilation or affrication occurring in conjunction with this semi-vowel.

hypothesize that the varying degree to which CF speakers exhibit liaison between words explains in part my lack of evidence.

Poirier (2009) also goes on to note that, while linguists most closely associate assibilation with QF, it does appear elsewhere in the Francophone world:

Il ne faut cependant pas croire qu'elle ne se rencontre qu'au Québec. En fait, on l'observe aussi dans d'autres aires francophones et dans des zones créolophones où le français a joué un rôle déterminant dans la formation de la langue locale. Il faut tout de même reconnaître que l'assibilation est de nos jours un fait rare au sein de la francophonie mondiale¹². (p. 380)

From the above citation one can see that not only is assibilation not restricted to QF, but also that it is known to exist in creolized areas. This fact provides good reason for this study, as the heterogeneous nature of francophone Louisiana could facilitate assibilation in one or more of its dialects. In fact, upon reading Poirier's statement that assibilation exists in certain French creoles; I explored the possibility of this feature in Louisiana Creole (LC). I quickly found that assibilation does indeed exist in LC. Valdman and Klingler (1997), two of the most prolific LC researchers, noted for example that /t/ and /d/ become /ts/ and /dz/ (p. 114). One example that they give is the word *petit* ("small") transcribed as [pitsi]. Since we now know of the existence of assibilation in LC, the close proximity in which LC and CF speakers coexist provides likely evidence that if assibilation exists in one variety it may very well exist in the other.

Despite Poirier's assertion that assibilation appears in French creole varieties and Valdman and Klingler's mention of it in LC, we are still left without much evidence as to the rate of assibilation in CF. Furthermore, while Poirier details the extent to which one finds assibilation in francophone populations around the world, he points out that one cannot easily

¹² One must not believe, however, that it (assibilation) is only found in Quebec. In fact, one also observes it in other francophone regions and in creole areas where French has played a determining role in the formation of the local language. At the same time, one must recognize that assibilation is in our day a rarity amongst the global francophone population.

find proof of assibilation in Louisiana. Poirier, like the few other linguists discussing assibilation in CF, cites only one article attesting to its appearance in CF. He cites a 2005 article by Picone and Valdman, which is one of the only published articles making any clear mention of assibilation in Louisiana at all. Here, they claim that:

L'on retrouve dans la région de la Ville Platte au nord, et nullement ailleurs, [l'assibilation] des dentales /t/ et /d/ devant les voyelles antérieures hautes (*dit* [d^ʔi], *tu* [t^sy]), un trait caractéristique des parlers laurentiens du Canada¹³. (Picone & Valdman, 2005, p. 146)

If the above statement about assibilation is accurate, then one expects to find no quantifiable amount of assibilation outside of Evangeline Parish, where the town of Ville Platte is located. However, this assumption coincides with neither my ensuing results nor with my personal experiences in talking with CF speakers. I have heard assibilation outside of the above-mentioned region, particularly in both Avoyelles and St. Landry parishes. The above article (Picone & Valdman, 2005) also does little more than assert that assibilation is limited to a particular region, and makes no mention of any data or proof to support the claim.

Also, I believe that the notion that assibilation is not a prominent feature of CF (as it is in QF) is due primarily to the repetition of the above citation. Throughout my search for mentions of assibilation in CF I have, aside from the rare mentions soon to be discussed, only found the repetition of this one attestation by Picone and Valdman, which the results of my study clearly note as inaccurate. Aside from Picone and Valdman's assertion, Dubois offers one of the only other substantive acknowledgments of the general presence of assibilation in Louisiana. According to Dubois (2005):

¹³ One finds in the region of Ville Platte to the north, and nowhere else, the [assibilation] of the dentals /t/ and /d/ before the high front vowels (*dit* [d^ʔi], *tu* [t^sy]), a trait characteristic of the Laurentian speakers of Canada.

Les affriquées [ts] et [dz], absentes dans les variétés acadiennes au Canada, sont plus fréquentes que [tʃ] et [dʒ] en français cadien dans toutes les paroisses et toutes les générations¹⁴. (pp. 301-302)

This quote represents both the rare mention of assibilation as existing at all in CF but also goes so far as to state that assibilation is in fact linguistically significant in Louisiana at least in the four parishes of Dubois' corpus. Furthermore, this citation brings AF into the discussion of the CF phonetic system, offering evidence that CF and AF in fact have very different phonetic tendencies, and it would be an oversimplification to assume that these two dialects consistently align with one another simply because of the supposed common ancestry of their speakers.

Despite the lack of studies detailing the rate of assibilation in CF, there exists one recent work devoted solely to the subject. Russell's article (2010) on assibilation in Evangeline Parish provides us with a detailed account of the feature in this particular parish. Here, Russell utilizes various historical events, such as the immigration patterns of Francophones into Louisiana, to determine if there is any link between the rate of assibilation in certain varieties of CF and the origins of that region's speakers. I reserve the specific details surrounding the possible origins of assibilation in CF for the following section, however. Currently of importance from Russell's work is the fact that it mentions that assibilation has historically existed in Louisiana outside the confines of Evangeline Parish, including areas such as Livingston Parish. Russell does not offer any quantitative data to support its current usage in CF, however, and I am therefore still left with little substantive information on the topic. And, in the end, Russell concludes that assibilation still remains largely a feature restricted to Evangeline Parish, stating that "[assibilation] is a feature characteristic of Laurentian French, but other than Ville Platte and its Evangeline Parish hinterland, it is not well known in Louisiana" (p. 2). The vague nature of

¹⁴ The affricates [ts] and [dz], absent in the Acadian varieties of Canada, are more frequent than [tʃ] and [dʒ] in Cajun French in all of the parishes and all the generations.

Russell's statement here does not preclude, however, the possibility of assibilation outside this region.

Because there is relatively little work currently being done on the rate of assibilation in CF, I decided to look at some of the older research done by linguists and lexicographers from the early and mid-twentieth century to determine if they noted anything of importance. Like the current research, I found that any mention of assibilation is equally scarce among these older documents. There are no mentions in the early CF literature of the specific rate of assibilation. However, I did locate a few instances where it is briefly mentioned. While Phillips (1945), in his phonetic analysis of CF, does not mention assibilation by name in his work, he does make note of it in passing, stating that “for *du* [one hears] [dzi] or [dzy]...in Evangeline” (Phillips, 1945, p. 160). This prescription of assibilation to Evangeline speakers may represent one of the oldest claims of this nature from which the more recent ones stem.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the 1930s and 1940s saw a spike in academic interest among several students from Louisiana State University who were sent out to document the lexicons of many of the French-speaking parishes of the state. These theses from the mid-twentieth century (Chaudoir, 1938; Guilbeau, 1936; Jeansonne, 1938; Montgomery, 1946; Olivier, 1937), while not purely linguistic in nature, often times contain phonetic transcriptions of much of the vocabulary documented therein. Because these theses are more dictionary-like in form than modern linguistic studies, it required that I search through the individual transcriptions of words and phrases for examples of assibilation (and affrication). In all, I found no reference to assibilation nor a transcription of this articulatory process in any of the theses from this era. This could mean that the researchers did not note any such feature in their work, which seems doubtful given the other attestations of its existence, or more likely that they chose not to note it

because of its perceived irrelevance at that time. In any case, it is safe to say that assibilation in CF remains a relatively underexplored and under-documented dialectal feature, which in turn lends merit to my research at hand. Of the articles cited above who mention assibilation in CF, none have provided quantifiable evidence of assibilation in CF. My study is thus the first to do so and therefore expands the notion of assibilation in CF.

3.2.2 Origin(s) of Assibilation in French

In this section I answer two important questions: 1) from where did assibilation come?, and 2) at what point it became popular in certain varieties of French? The history of this feature, particularly in QF, helps me to hypothesize as to its possible origin in CF and to understand any possible shifts in rate between my generations. There are in effect three possible explanations for the origin of assibilation in French that have received academic attention:

- 1) It is a feature that developed independently in Quebec.
- 2) Assibilation arose through interference with English.
- 3) It is a feature that existed already in Europe, which the settlers of Quebec brought with them in their dialect(s).

As I soon point out, however, only one of these possibilities can sustain a fair amount of scrutiny and accounts for its presence in both Canada and Louisiana.

The first hypothesis—the notion that assibilation developed naturally in Quebec sometime after it was settled—seems plausible at first glance. A high rate of assibilation is, after all, considered to be one of the most defining features of QF. The fact remains, however, that there exist dialects of French other than the Laurentian varieties in which one finds assibilation at an unsubstantiated rate. As I mentioned in the previous section, one hears /ts/ and /dz/ in both CF (Dubois, 2005; Picone & Valdman, 2005; Russell, 2010) and various varieties of French creoles

(Poirier, 1994; Valdman & Klingler, 1997). It seems rather unlikely then that this is a feature whose presence and high rate developed separately both in Quebec and in other locations around the world. Since one finds assibilation in numerous dialects of French around the world, I contend that more study is required before we can safely argue that its origins stem uniquely from speakers in Quebec.

Some have proposed instead that assibilation owes its origins to the English language and the bilingualism that developed in Canada out of trade between the two peoples. Poirier (1994) cites Dunn (1874) as the first to put forth this hypothesis in which he claims that assibilation came about from the constant back and forth between French and English among Quebecers. According to this hypothesis, assibilation is a result of language contact. This constant bilingualism caused a sort of alteration to QF, and they began to assibilate words of a similar nature in French and English containing /t/ and /d/ followed by /i/ or /y/. No one can argue that English and QF have been in contact for centuries and that language contact as an external factor can have an effect on the structure of a language, particularly on that of the minority. However, it seems highly unlikely that such an explanation alone accounts for the high rate of assibilation found in QF.

If contact interference from English were to account for assibilation in QF, it would require that there be some evidence of the same phenomenon in other varieties of French whose speakers are surrounded by Anglophones. As Rousseau (1935) notes, however, the Acadians are a perfect (and geographically relevant) example refuting the validity of this theory. If assibilation developed out of contact between English and French then one should find an equal (if not higher) frequency of it in AF since it has experienced more incursions from English than QF. But, as I have mentioned before assibilation is not a common feature of AF. Poirier even goes so

far as to state that it is non-existent in AF (1994, p. 79). I therefore feel comfortable echoing the sentiments of both Poirier and Rousseau discounting interference from English as the origin for assibilation.

The final hypothesis remaining states that assibilation predates the French settlers' arrival in North America. To explore this idea I turn back to Dumas who stresses that assibilation is by no means a new phenomenon in French, as it has in fact existed in some form or another for centuries. He states that:

Ce phénomène du passage de *t* à *ts*, il n'est pas non plus nouveau dans le domaine français ; lui-même et toute une série de phénomènes parallèles s'étaient déjà produits dans la variété de latin parlée en Gaule (le gallo-roman) avant qu'elle ne donne naissance au français¹⁵. (Dumas, 1987, p. 10)

According then to Dumas, assibilation is a feature that persisted through the transformation from Gallo-Roman to Old French. Such a statement implies then that this feature remained intact in certain varieties of European French at least up until the moment when the French began settling the New World, which in turn explains its existence in dialects such as QF. Following this logic, one can postulate that assibilation is not a feature that originated among QF speakers after their arrival in North America, nor was it caused by interference from English, but rather is a persistence of an older form of French. This hypothesis then appears as the most logical of the three, and it is because of this that Poirier concludes that “l'origine européenne du phénomène ne [fait] pas de doute¹⁶” (p. 79).

Latin as the source of assibilation in QF is not without problems, however. While it offers a valid explanation for why we find assibilation in QF it also begs the question as to why then is it not a salient feature of other varieties of French, particularly those in North America such as

¹⁵ This phenomenon of the passage of *t* to *ts*, it is not new either in the French domain; it and a series of parallel phenomena were already being produced in a variety of Latin spoken in Gaul (Gallo-Roman) before it gave birth to French.

¹⁶ The phenomenon's European origin does not create any doubt.

AF and CF? Poirier (1994) addresses this point by looking at the rates of assibilation both within Quebec—in the region of Charlevoix—and in two other communities: Windsor, Ontario and Old Mines, Missouri. His data¹⁷ showed that “l’assibilation est connue partout où l’influence québécoise s’est fait sentir¹⁸” (p. 82). In examining various dialects of French in which one finds some degree of assibilation, Poirier noted a certain pattern related to the origins of those settlers: one finds a high rate of assibilation in regions that were settled by Francophones from Quebec (or *la Nouvelle France*, as it was then called) in the early eighteenth century. This is the case with Old Mines, which was settled in 1726 by French speakers from New France and Windsor, settled in 1701. His sample of Charlevoix speakers, however, did not assibilate at a high rate, and he accredits this to the fact that this region of Quebec was settled in the late seventeenth century and remained isolated for much of its history. A high rate of assibilation, according to Poirier, therefore stems primarily from its increased usage in New France beginning in the eighteenth century and the late immigration of these speakers, who had by then increased their rate of assibilation, to other regions.

Friesner (2010) echoes Poirier’s hypothesis that there is a correlation between the time during which Quebecers moved into a region and the degree to which one finds assibilation. He equally concludes that a high rate of assibilation in QF has its roots in the early eighteenth century, and that we find it today in regions that were settled by Quebecers during or after that time (p. 37). Poirier’s and Friesner’s conclusion provides hints toward the existence of assibilation in Louisiana. Just as is the case with Old Mines, Missouri, settlements in Louisiana by Francophones from New France could likely explain the feature’s presence in that area.

¹⁷ Poirier’s data include twelve recordings of QF speakers from Charlevoix whose dates of birth go as far back as 1876. Because of the relative isolation of this part of Quebec, these speakers represent an excellent sample of nineteenth-century French from the region (p. 80). The information surrounding Windsor is based on the work of Hull (1956) and that for Old Mines is taken from Carrière (1941).

¹⁸ Assibilation is known everywhere that Quebec made its influence felt.

However, Louisiana's heterogeneous linguistic situation makes it difficult to assess the influence of any particular immigrant group on CF for three reasons. First, Louisiana was colonized over a long period. This encompasses the early eighteenth century when colonists from various French regions and diverse social backgrounds all came to the community under study. At this time there were also settlers coming down from New France as well. Second, control of Louisiana switched from the French to the Spanish, which in turn brought new linguistic elements into the colony. It was also at this time that the Acadians arrived. And finally, French speakers from France continued to arrive in the nineteenth century after Louisiana statehood. This prolonged period of immigration and social diversity therefore requires recognition when considering any similar patterns between linguistic developments in Canada and those in Louisiana.

To elaborate on one of the points above, although Acadians represent a significant portion of the francophone population in Louisiana, there were also settlers predating the Acadians' arrival, some of whom were from Quebec. For example, Bienville, who was born in Montreal and served four times as colonial governor of Louisiana. I contend therefore that one finds a varying degree of assibilation in Louisiana—which resembles neither its high usage in QF nor its total absence in AF—because of the state's multi-origin past. Russell's work on assibilation in Evangeline Parish similarly expresses the importance of recognizing the diversity of francophone Louisiana when considering assibilation.

The Acadians, who arrived relatively late in Louisiana (after the French period)...did not [exhibit assibilation], but in the case of the Francophones already there, Poirier's hypotheses support our idea that at least certain settlers who had arrived before the Acadians [assibilated] dental consonants as in Quebec, since many of the first colonists were from New France...The [assibilation] that still exists in Louisiana would therefore be a vestige of the speech of these settlers. (Russell, 2010, p. 16)

Such reasoning explains why I have noted assibilation in both St. Landry and Avoyelles, whose settlers, as I outlined in Chapter 1, were not primarily Acadians expelled from Canada but rather

French speakers from various other francophone nations such as France and Quebec (New France). And, it is this linguistic diversity in Louisiana that serves as one of the primary reasons for which I believe a quantitative study of assibilation in CF is important. If I establish that assibilation is common feature among some CF speakers, I may be able to add to the data supporting Poirier and Friesner's hypothesis about its origin.

3.3 Affrication in French

Affrication of the consonants /t/ and /d/ requires a slightly different treatment than that of assibilation for two primary reasons. First, it has not received as much attention from linguists as assibilation has. Secondly, affrication in French occurs primarily in a language minority setting. What the literature does offer on affrication is substantive proof that high rates of affrication are indicative of the AF dialect, which allows for conjecture as to how the feature may have come to exist in CF. Finally, as the title of this chapter suggests, the very word for 'Cajun' in French (*cadien*) demands a look at its pronunciation since one often hears it affricated as [kadʒɛ̃].

3.3.1 Affrication as a Marker of Dialect

In terms of its use as a marker of a particular French dialect, affrication is a common feature of certain varieties of French in Canada. While one most often associates assibilation with speakers of QF, one can equally tie affrication to the variety of French known as Acadian French, which is spoken in the Maritime Provinces of Canada¹⁹. Having already discussed at length in Chapter 1 the correlation between Acadians and Cajuns, it should come as no surprise that linguists, historians, and even CF speakers themselves draw linguistic ties between AF and CF. One such tie is the assertion that affrication in CF is a vestige of the dialect of French

¹⁹ The term *The Maritime Provinces* typically refers to the three Canadian provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. Newfoundland is not included under the umbrella of this term. However, there exist AF speakers in that province as well as in the state of Maine. As stated in chapter 1, the Acadians who settled Louisiana were primarily from modern day Nova Scotia.

imported into Louisiana in the eighteenth century by the expelled Acadians. There is to date relatively little evidence as to the saliency of this feature in modern varieties of Louisiana French, and most accounts of affrication in Louisiana are little more than anecdotal at best. Nevertheless, there exist studies of affrication in AF as well as brief mentions of it in CF that offer up clues about the feature and are worth consideration.

We find one of the most detailed accounts of affrication in AF in Karin Flikeid's book (1984), *La variation phonétique dans le parler acadien du nord-est du Nouveau-Brunswick*. Flikeid notes that affrication is a defining feature that is specific and inherent to AF. She also points out, through an exhaustive look at the research done throughout the twentieth century on affrication in AF, that this feature is not only common but also a phonetic trait that serves as a defining way to separate AF from QF. Flikeid's affirmation, supported by her exploration of works by numerous linguists who note the presence of affrication in AF (Geddes, 1897; Haden, 1973; Lucci, 1972; Massignon, 1947; Poirier, 1928), draws a clear distinction between AF and other varieties of French spoken throughout Canada²⁰. It is this notion of affrication as a defining feature of AF that has in fact prompted in part my decision to include it in my study. One cannot deny that there are likely some phonetic traits purportedly uniquely Acadian that still persist today in Louisiana. Therefore, any affrication that I find here in Louisiana could shed light on the modern linguistic link(s) between AF and CF.

It has been my personal experience in Louisiana that many people perceive the affrication of /t/ and /d/ to be a common feature of CF speech. I attribute this unfounded assumption on the

²⁰ It is interesting to note, however, that affrication is not common among AF speakers from Prince Edward Island. Rather, the speakers of that variety of AF show high rates of assibilation. According to King and Ryan (1998) and King (2000), this fact serves as further proof that a high rate of assibilation in certain Canadian dialects does not owe its origins to older forms of European French that were carried over to Canada. Since Quebec and PEI have no strong history of dialect contact, King posits that this represents an instance in which assibilation developed naturally among PEI's AF speakers.

nostalgic ties between Cajuns and their Acadian ancestors and the fact that a high rate of affrication is typical of AF. This misperception fails however to recognize the heterogeneous nature of francophone Louisiana, both past and present, and the regional, ethnic, and dialectal diversity that merged together to give us what we label simply as CF today. Nevertheless, affrication remains a defining feature of AF, and in my experience Louisianans thusly purported it to be a part of CF. It is the extent to which affrication truly plays a role in CF as well as the regions in which it enjoys prominence that I am attempting to discover here. I have not found to date any quantitative study of the rate of affrication in CF, thus mine is the first to offer data that details the extent to which this feature exists in Louisiana.

Just as Poirier outlined the process of assibilation and its prominence in QF, he also spoke of the difference between this and the affrication that one finds in AF:

Les occlusives /t/ et /d/ suivies des voyelles fermées antérieures ou des semi-consonnes palatales ne prononcent pas [t^s] et [d^z] comme au Québec, mais [t^f] et [d^ʒ]. Les mots *petit* et *dur* s'entendent donc [pt^fi] et [d^ʒʏr]²¹. (Poirier, 2009, p. 387)

Poirier's statement here remains in line with the other literature on the subject, which states that affrication is a distinctly AF feature and is a point of distinction between QF and AF. Despite his claims regarding the importance of affrication in AF, Poirier fails to mention whether or not the feature is common in CF. There is a clear dearth of information on these features as they pertain to CF, and the codification and analysis of their presence in CF only helps to draw attention to the links between all of these dialects of French in North America.

The lack of any work of substance that documents affrication in CF can be explained in two ways: 1) researchers have typically not noticed the feature because it does not have a high enough rate of occurrence, or 2) affrication is so common that it is seen as unremarkable. This

²¹ The occlusives /t/ and /d/ followed by the closed front vowels or palatal semi-consonants is not pronounced [t^s] and [d^z] like in Quebec, but [t^f] and [d^ʒ]. The words *petit* and *dur* are thus realized as [pt^fi] and [dʒʏr].

being said, I did find various references in a number of the aforementioned dissertations and theses from the twentieth century (Clifton, 1975; Lavaud-Grassin, 1988; Montgomery, 1946; Olivier, 1937; Saucier, 1949)²². The earliest mention of affrication that I found in these sources belongs to Olivier (1937) who, in her thesis on the French of St. Landry Parish, only briefly mentions affrication. She states simply that “the sounds (tʃ) and (dʒ) occur in a few words. (dʒ) occurs especially in English words adopted in the dialect” (pp. vi–vii)²³. Examples of affricated words from Olivier’s thesis included: *cadien* [kadʒɛ̃] (“Cajun”) (p. 18), *diaboul* [dʒabul] (“devil”) (p. 35), and *moitié* [mwatʃje] (“half”) (p. 65). Olivier made no attempt to analyze the affrication found in words such as these in St. Landry Parish. But, her work provides evidence that I should find some level of affrication in my St. Landry speakers. With respect to Montgomery’s thesis (1946) on Vermilion Parish I also found that she transcribed certain words using the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. She made no real mention of affrication outside of her transcription, however, and the affrication appeared to be more or less sporadic in frequency.

It is not until one reads Clifton’s dissertation (1975) that a more detailed account of affrication appears to have been done. As it stands, Clifton’s study is the only one of the above-mentioned works to date that offers any substantial information of the presence of affrication in CF beyond merely mentioning or transcribing it in a handful of words. According to her, affrication is a prominent feature of CF. She even goes so far as to state that:

²² Other theses from this time period mentioned previously, such as those by Guilbeau (1936), Chaudoir (1938), and Jeansonne (1938), made no mention of affrication in their discussion of the phonetic features of their parish’s French. Nor did I find any examples of affrication in their transcriptions. Because I am unsure as to whether these researchers did not find any affrication in Avoyelles or Lafourche or simply chose not to document it, I believe my study of these two parishes is still necessary.

²³ Some researchers may interpret Olivier’s work as evidence that affrication is a result of interference from English. For reasons elaborated upon in Chapter 4, I do not support such a hypothesis as a likely explanation of the origin of my type of affrication in certain CF speakers.

Si l'affrication n'est pas, cependant, obligatoire aux dialectes français de Louisiane, elle arrive beaucoup plus souvent que non, assez souvent en vérité pour que ça soit une caractéristique phonologique très marquée du FL et une qui sert à le séparer du français standard²⁴. (Clifton, 1975, p. 17)

Such a statement offers some proof that affrication does indeed play a significant role in the phonetic make-up of CF. Despite the certainty with which she makes her claims about a high rate of affrication in CF, there appeared to be no explicit data or quantitative analysis that accompanied the statement upon which I could eventually compare my own results from this study.

Unlike the affricates produced in assibilation, the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are common in English, which led me to originally wonder if there is any possibility that their appearance in CF could be the result of some level of borrowing or language interference as Olivier (1937) suggests. However, Clifton goes on to explore the possible origins of affrication in CF and coincidentally rules out any such interference from English, citing that the popularity of this feature in numerous other dialects of French makes such an explanation unlikely (1975, p. 68). Instead, Clifton finds that the most likely explanation is that affrication is a feature that continued to develop among certain dialects (such as AF and CF) in North America as one finds vestiges of this feature in both Latin and older varieties of French. I have yet to find any real research to support her claim, however, it does not seem improbable. Interestingly, I did stumble upon one mention of affrication in a historical, European context. Grévisse (1961) briefly mentions affrication as a feature of Belgian French:

²⁴ If affrication, however, is not required in Louisiana French dialects, it occurs a lot more often than not, often enough in fact for it to be a very marked phonological characteristic of [CF] and one that serves to separate it from standard French.

Dans certaines syllabes où *di* et *ti* sont suivis d'une voyelle orale ou d'une voyelle nasale, les Wallons font entendre parfois une semi-occlusive *dj*, *tch* : *Remédier*, *moitié*, *soutien*, prononcés *reméDJer*, *moiTCHé*, *souTCHyin*²⁵. (Grévisse, 1961, p. 49)

I did not find in Grévisse's work nor in any other the mention of affrication as a feature of the Norman and Picard dialects, whose speakers represent a large percentage of the settlers who came to New France and Louisiana. But, the recent French comedy *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis* (Berri et al., 2008), which takes place in a region of northern France that borders Belgium, depicts rural French speakers using an affricated dialect of French. While this film is not a linguistic study of that region's variety of French, the use of affrication in the film, along with Grévisse's remarks, establishes that affrication has historically been a part of certain European French vernaculars. This could in turn be useful in trying to ascertain the origin of its presence in Louisiana.

Various articles about other dialects of French in North America—going back as far as the 1940s—briefly mention the presence of affrication in CF. For example, the linguist J.M. Carrière notes in his article, *The Phonology of Missouri French* (1941), that affrication is a stable feature of CF. While describing the state of palatalization in Missouri French he states that:

The *t* is carried to the back of the mouth, assimilated to the *k* position, thus becoming *k*. Acadian French, Louisiana French and the French dialects of the West Indies carried the evolution of this sound even farther, namely, to *tch* [tʃ]: *métchié* [metʃje],...*motchié* [mɔtʃje]; *tchiens* [tʃjẽ]. (p. 512)

In addition to this description of affrication with the voiceless consonant /t/, he also mentions that the feature extends to its voiced counterpart /d/. Furthermore, Carrière goes on to note the heavy presence of assibilation in Missouri French, but states that “it is interesting to note that in Acadian French and Louisiana French...[dj] and [tj] became [dʒ] and [tʃ] instead of [dz] and [ts]” (p. 513). Once again we find here that affrication is the attributed feature to CF while

²⁵ In certain syllables where *di* and *ti* are followed by an oral or nasal vowel, Walloons sometimes make a semi-occlusive *dj*, *tch*: *Remédier*, *moitié*, *soutien*, pronounced as *reméDJer*, *moiTCHé*, *souTCHyin*,

assibilation is said to not exist. This brief mention of affrication by Carrière does little more than establish what I have already noted, however, that affrication exists as a feature in CF. And aside from this article and the others mentioned previously, the dearth of detailed research into the presence and frequency of affrication in CF only helps to validate the need for my current research.

3.3.2 Cadien, Cadzien, or Cadjin? The Answer...

A study that seeks to ascertain the degree to which affrication exists in CF is important for several reasons, not the least of which is the fact that it appears in the very name of this dialect of French: *le français cadien* (pronounced in Louisiana as [kadʒɛ̃]). As my data later show—throughout all four parishes, whether their pronunciations favor assibilation, affrication, or the occlusive—all speakers of CF included in my study affricated the word *cadien*. Such a high affrication then begs the question of not only why this word, above all others, is consistently affricated, but also from where did this lexicalized affrication originate? Although there is little to be found in terms of linguistic research into the origins of the term, Jacques Henry (1998) explored in detail the origin of *cadien* in his aptly titled article, “*Acadien*” to “*Cajun*” to “*Cadien*”: *Ethnic Labelization and Construction of Identity*. Here, Henry not only states that, as one might suppose, the term *cadien* is a truncation of the word *acadien*, but he further details the progression from *acadien* to *cadien*. According to Henry, *acadien* persisted for quite some time as the common referent to those dispersed by *Le Grand Dérangement* as well as those remaining in Acadia. He did find a letter written in 1771 by a Louisianan priest that contains *cadien* rather than *acadien* (p. 32). This single use of the new form, according to Henry, is in no way evident of any sort of mass change occurring at that time as “more than a century would elapse before *cadien* appeared in print in Louisiana” again (p. 33).

Henry later concludes that *cadien* was never a term originating from those who would later come to be called by it, but rather by outsiders using the term to denote speakers of CF in Louisiana. The term *cadien* was in turn later adopted by CF speakers and incorporated into their speech to refer to their language and culture. If this is indeed the case, it offers a good explanation as to why I find the affrication of a single word in regions where those CF speakers show little to no preference for affrication. It would therefore seem entirely logical that even speakers of a non-affricating variety of CF would succumb to adopting this word with its affrication in tow. As such, the pronunciation of *cadien* as [kadʒẽ] in CF is not an indicator of an affricating dialect but rather an example of language contact and phonological borrowing. Because of this evidence, I distinguish in my analysis of affrication between the word *cadien* (or one of its derivations) and the spontaneous production of an affricate. I also explore the rates of affrication both with and without *cadien* included in the data so as to determine how much this word represents the instances of affrication in CF. A drop in the rate of affrication, once *cadien* is removed from the data, should point to the linguistic significance of lexicalization in the overall usage of affrication. A low rate of affrication outside of *cadien* would also hint that this feature's presence as a CF dialect marker relies heavily on lexicalization.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY AND DISTRIBUTION OF DATA

In the following chapter, I show how all of the earlier information plays a role in the study of assibilation and affrication in CF as well as how it affects my methodological decisions along the way. First, I begin with a brief discussion of the Dubois Cajun French Corpus, which is the corpus from which I selected interviews to be used in my research. I discuss not only the finalized corpus as it exists today at LSU but also the story of its creation and how, because of the sociolinguistic methodology out of which it was born, it is the ideal resource for the type of study that I am conducting.

I then shift my focus to an outline of my methodological approach and process for carrying out this study. I begin with a detailed account of the software used, an outline of my social and linguistic variables taken into account, and a description of my coding process. I then demonstrate how this process prepared me for the subsequent discussion of my data. Finally I summarize the distribution of my collected tokens and explain how even these first results offer answers to substantial questions posed in previous chapters. I begin by answering perhaps the most important of these questions: where in Louisiana does one find assibilation and affrication? And finally, I describe some of the linguistic factors that I have chosen to consider.

4.1 The Dubois Cajun French Corpus

As stated earlier, the interviews for this study come from the Dubois Cajun French Corpus, which Dubois and her team of researchers completed in 1997. As anyone who has worked on the creation of a corpus can attest, it is, more often than not, a long and tenuous process that requires months and sometimes even years of planning. The Dubois Corpus is no exception. Dubois began work on the corpus in the mid nineties using linguistic data from the 1990 U.S. Census.

From the census she was able to determine the Louisiana parishes with the highest percentages of French speakers. As I have stated earlier, the four parishes selected for inclusion in the corpus are: Avoyelles, Lafourche, St. Landry, and Vermilion. These parishes not only represent those in which a high percentage of French speakers reside but also reflect geographically distinct locales of Acadiana. Avoyelles and St. Landry are both in the northern tip and center (respectively) of Acadiana, while Vermilion is in the south-central portion, and Lafourche lies in the far southeast corner. Dubois then focused her attention on creating a fieldwork methodology for collecting data from residents living in selected cities or towns—most often the parish seat—from these parishes.

Following the selection of these parishes, Dubois conducted a series of surveys including a pilot questionnaire and social surveys. Initially, she collected a survey containing questions about linguistic attitudes and cultural identity from 1,440 individuals living in Thibodaux (Lafourche), Abbeville (Vermilion), Eunice (St. Landry), and Marksville (Avoyelles) resulting in an equal 360 individual responses from each corresponding community (Dubois, 1997b). Within each of the parishes, these 360 respondents are also equally divided by gender, with 180 men and 180 women from each parish. The collected surveys also reflect the importance of age as a social factor. Dubois delineated three important generations for the respondents: 1) Old, born between 1905-1933, 2) Middle, 1935-1952, and 3) Young, 1953-1978²⁶. These generations reflect the various stages of language shift within CF. The Old Generation, for example, consists of CF speakers whose first language is French, learned English later in life, and typically stopped going to school after 2 to 5 years because they needed to seek work as farmers, fishermen, or in the oil industry (Dubois, 2005, p. 288). The Middle Generation, in contrast, were raised speaking both

²⁶ As I will discuss later in this chapter, my age factor is based on Dubois' original delineations.

English and French at home and grew up in a time when Louisiana began experiencing positive financial and social changes. These speakers, while fluent in both languages, generally prefer English as their everyday language (2005). The Young Generation is the most proud of their cultural heritage, however, they also speak French with the least frequency. Their CF usage is often restricted to conversations with the older generations (2005).

Each parish's data contains an equal number of respondents from the three generations—totaling 120 from each generation per parish. The content of these initial surveys is such that they serve as tools from which one obtain information regarding cultural norms, social constructs, and the changing ideas of what it means to be 'Cajun' in these communities. Dubois has published several articles discussing the results of these initial surveys (see e.g., Dubois, Gautreau, Margot, Melançon, & Veler, 1995; Dubois, 1997a; Dubois, 1997b; Dubois & Melançon, 1997; Dubois & Horvath, 1998).

After examining the data from the initial surveys discussed above, Dubois was able to narrow down the respondents to the 120 who were subsequently interviewed for inclusion in the corpus as it stands today. Dubois and Melançon (1997) explain in detail the process by which Dubois chose these 120 individuals in the above-cited article. With respect to the finalized corpus itself, it contains over 300 hours of recorded interviews with CF speakers from these four parishes. There are thirty CF speakers from each parish; 15 men and 15 women. In addition to gender, the final corpus also has an equal representation of speakers according to generation. Each parish contains 10 old, 10 middle, and 10 young speakers (5 men and 5 women for each).

Within the corpus, each of these 120 individuals has three separately recorded interviews: 1) a conversation in English of approximately 30 minutes, 2) a conversation in CF of approximately 60 minutes conducted by a fellow member of the CF speech community, and 3) a

conversation of approximately 30 minutes in which the interviewer is an American who learned to speak academic French. My personal research for this study, however, stems only from the interviews conducted entirely in CF. Like the interviewee, the interviewer for those recordings is a native speaker of CF from the same region. I have chosen to rely solely on these interviews as I contend that a conversation between two speakers of the same variety of (Cajun) French and from the same hometown/area provides for the most realistic and authentic sampling of CF available.

4.2 My Subsample of Cajun Male Speakers

My finalized subsample for this study contains the 48 CF male speakers from the Dubois Corpus for whom I coded all instances of the three variants included in my study²⁷. In my pilot study for this project, whose results demonstrated a significant enough presence of both variants that it warranted further study, I analyzed the speech of 24 CF male speakers. In an effort to also test the validity of social factors such as location and age, I chose these 24 speakers as follows: 6 speakers from each of the four parishes and 2 speakers from each of my three generations there within. Table 4.1 is an alphabetized list of all 48 participants in my study according to the pseudonym assigned to them by Dubois during the corpus's creation. This table also indicates each speaker's generation, date of birth, and parish. Finally, the 24 speakers included in my pilot study are indicated by an 'X' in the fifth column.

²⁷ These 48 male speakers are in addition to the twelve women coded for an initial testing of gender as a social factor, whose results are outlined earlier in Chapter 2. As I proved with those data, I chose to focus my study on male CF speakers because I determined that both assibilation and affrication are vernacular features largely disfavored among women.

Table 4.1. Overview of selected CF speakers from the Dubois Corpus.

Pseudonym	Generation	Date of birth	Parish	Pilot Study
Alban	Old	1913	St. Landry	X
Alexandre	Middle	1939	Lafourche	X
Antoine	Middle	1938	Avoyelles	
Armand	Old	1911	Lafourche	
Arthur	Middle	1937	St. Landry	X
Benoît	Young	1965	Vermilion	X
Cédric	Young	1974	St. Landry	
Charles	Young	1962	St. Landry	
Christophe	Middle	1935	Lafourche	
Émmanuel	Old	1920	Vermilion	X
Étienne	Young	1954	Avoyelles	
Eugène	Old	1929	Avoyelles	
Fabius	Old	1918	St. Landry	
François	Middle	1939	Avoyelles	X
Gérard	Old	1928	St. Landry	X
Guillaume	Young	1961	Lafourche	
Henri	Middle	1940	Avoyelles	
Jacques	Young	1956	Avoyelles	
Joachim	Old	1912	Avoyelles	
Jonathan	Young	1978	St. Landry	X
Joseph	Old	1931	Avoyelles	
Julien	Old	1932	St. Landry	
Lino	Old	1916	Vermilion	X
Louis	Old	1905	Vermilion	
Marcel	Middle	1940	St. Landry	
Maurice	Young	1964	Vermilion	
Nicolas	Old	1927	Lafourche	X

(Table 4.1 continued)

Pseudonym	Generation	Date of birth	Parish	Pilot Study
Noël	Middle	1940	Lafourche	X
Normand	Young	1956	St. Landry	
Octave	Old	1931	St. Landry	
Olivier	Young	1962	Avoyelles	X
Omer	Old	1923	Avoyelles	X
Philippe	Young	1970	Lafourche	X
Placido	Middle	1950	St. Landry	X
Raoul	Young	1974	Lafourche	X
Raymond	Old	1923	Avoyelles	X
Rémi	Young	1964	Vermilion	X
René	Young	1956	St. Landry	X
Robert	Middle	1940	Vermilion	X
Roger	Young	1955	Avoyelles	
Roméo	Middle	1937	Vermilion	
Samuel	Middle	1945	Avoyelles	X
Serge	Middle	1948	Vermilion	X
Sylvain	Young	1974	Avoyelles	X
Théodore	Old	1926	Lafourche	X
Valentin	Middle	1937	St. Landry	
Valérien	Middle	1941	St. Landry	
Vincent	Middle	1951	Avoyelles	

These selected CF male speakers do not represent all of those in the corpus. However, I made a conscious decision to include both the oldest (Louis, 1905, Vermilion) and youngest (Jonathan, 1978, St. Landry) male speakers in the Dubois corpus so as to stretch the limits of my generations as far as possible.

During my pilot study, I noted that neither assibilation nor affrication played a significant role in the speech of my 12 speakers from Lafourche and Vermilion parishes. For each parish I collected approximately 800 tokens. In Lafourche I found 0 tokens of affrication and only 8 for assibilation (all from the young speakers). Vermilion speakers' use of these variants was equally bleak, with only 1 token of assibilation and 22 for affrication. The overwhelming preference for the occlusive in both of these parishes led me to conclude that neither assibilation nor affrication are particularly prominent features of these parishes. Therefore, I decided to focus the majority of this final study on the other two parishes: Avoyelles and St. Landry. After my pilot results, I coded an additional 3 speakers (1 per generation) for Lafourche and Vermilion to ensure that these features are indeed absent²⁸. The additional speakers confirmed my assertion, so I decided to add additional speakers from Avoyelles and St. Landry. This decision explains why my subsample of speakers above in Table 4.1 contains 15 speakers each from Avoyelles and St. Landry but only 9 speakers each from Lafourche and Vermilion.

4.3 The Coding Process

The actual process of coding the 48 speakers selected from the corpus began in Spring 2009. After selecting the above speakers as those suitable for eventual coding, I created a coding sheet as well as a system of symbols and abbreviations that I could use to most efficiently code my variables. These symbols, found below in Table 4.2, depict important sociolinguistic factors such as the type of articulation, phonemic context, the position of a variant within a word, the speaker's parish of origin, and the generation to which they correspond.

²⁸ A more detailed account of assibilation and affrication in Lafourche and Vermilion parishes can be found in 4.6, where I discuss the near-total absence of these features in those parishes as well as offer an explanation for the few tokens collected.

Table 4.2. Outline of factors considered in the coding of three variants.

Linguistic & Social Factors	Explanation	Symbol
Type of Articulation	Occlusive	N
	Assibilation	A
	Affrication	F
Context	Phonemic context of syllable onset /d/	d
	Phonemic context of syllable onset /t/	t
Variant	Absence of assibilation/affrication	0
	Pronunciation of voiceless affricate [ts]	s
	Pronunciation of voiceless affricate [tʃ]	S
	Pronunciation of voiced affricate [dz]	z
	Pronunciation of voiced affricate [dʒ]	Z
Syllable	Articulation occurs at beginning of word	B
	Articulation occurs in middle of word	M
	Articulation occurs at end of word	E
Speaker's Parish	Avoyelles Parish	AP
	Lafourche Parish	LP
	St. Landry Parish	SLP
	Vermilion Parish	VP
Age Factor	Old Generation	O
	Middle Generation	M
	Young Generation	Y
Gender	Male Speaker	M
	Female Speaker	F

Using this system above, I was able to code each speaker's use of assibilation and affrication as well as note the possible relevant linguistic structures surrounding the individual tokens.

The information in Table 4.2 also reflects the sociolinguistic nature of this study, with both linguistic and social factors accounted for in the coding process. Linguistic factors, such as type of articulation, context, variant, and syllable, are all important for different reasons. The type of articulation, first and foremost, represents my linguistic variable, which accounts for the three variants. Following the type of articulation, the symbols used for coding the phonemic context allowed me to note whether or not the occlusive or affricate occurs in correspondence with the voiceless /t/ or voiced /d/. With regard to the syllable factor, I chose to code this so as to determine if the variant's placement within a word affects variant usage.

There are three primary social factors that I also consider in my study: 1) age, 2) gender, and 3) location. I outlined the sociolinguistic significance of these factors in chapters 1 and 2. With respect to the coding process, age and gender are simply reflected by the speaker's date of birth and 'M' or 'F' for gender. Their location is listed according to the abbreviations for the four parishes in Table 4.2.

In order to maintain accuracy and exclude the possibility of unnecessarily collecting more tokens from one participant than another, I chose to code approximately 40 minutes of interview for each CF speaker. As I mentioned earlier, the Dubois Corpus contains three interviews for each speaker, however I relied solely on the interview conducted in CF by a fellow CF speaker from that region. These interviews are all approximately one hour in length. I started coding each interview at approximately 15 minutes after the beginning of the recording. I chose to do this for two main reasons. First, this 15-minute delay allowed for me to begin coding at a point where the interviewer had completed their introduction and the posing of brief, sometimes yes/no questions surrounding basic information on the speaker. This delay also served to supersede the beginning moments of the interview when the interlocutor was not as comfortable with the

interviewing process and tended to offer simple answers. I found that after 10 to 15 minutes the speakers typically sounded more at ease with the process and therefore their speech was more natural, which is important for any phonetic study.

With specific regard to the listening and coding of my data, I used the computer program Audacity (version 1.2.6) to play the .wav file interviews. This program allows me to stop, pause, and play back any tokens that are not clear at a first listen. It also allowed for me to see the specific time during the interview that the token occurs. Finally, I have chosen to use Audacity as it is capable of letting me isolate and save individual portions of the interview. This feature became extremely helpful in creating clips of specific words and phrases exhibiting assimilation and affrication. In the few instances when Audacity still does not allow for an accurate coding of a particular token, I relied on the program Express Scribe. This program allows the user to slow down the rate of speech in a .wav file, while providing a minimal amount of distortion in the recording. Finally, I discarded any token that was still unclear. The coding process for each speaker's forty-minute excerpt required roughly three hours of work, and I collected an average of one hundred tokens per speaker. This number varied somewhat, however, depending on several factors, including the speed at which the participant spoke, their level of fluency, and their use of a varied vocabulary. Appendix A is an example of a completed coding sheet for one of my speakers. Once I had coded all 48 selected CF speakers, I entered my data into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets so that I could later transfer the data to a variety of statistical analysis programs such as JMP and Goldvarb.

4.4 Distribution of Three Variants in Cajun French

The coding of all 48 of my CF male speakers resulted in a collection of 5,944 tokens. Table 4.3 shows the distribution of the tokens according to the 3 possible types of articulation.

Table 4.3. Distribution of data according to type of articulation.

Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
3,761 (63%)	1,583 (27%)	600 (10%)
Number of Tokens: 5,944		

These basic results first answer the most fundamental question posed at the beginning of this study: What is the most common/preferred variant in CF? As the above data indicate, the occlusive variant, which represents over half (63%) of the tokens, is by far the preferred variant in CF. The occlusive pronunciation, in which /t/ and /d/ are pronounced according to the “standard” rules of modern European French, occurred over twice as often as assibilation (27%). Nevertheless, assibilation does account for almost a third of the tokens, which indicates the need for further study into where one finds it and who is using it. Affrication, on the other hand, tells somewhat of a different story than the occlusive and assibilation variants. It occurred the least often with only 600 tokens (10%). The small amount of affrication is surprising given its status as a supposedly prevalent feature of AF and the historical ties between the Acadians and Cajuns. It is thus safe to say that, regardless of historical or cultural ties to Acadia, modern CF has more in common with its European and Québécois cousins in terms of the pronunciation of the occlusives /t/ and /d/.

4.5 Discussion of Three Variants According to Linguistic Factors

In the following section, I would like to treat my three variants according to the various linguistic factors found in Table 4.2 including phonemic context, variant type, and syllable position. Based on accounts of assibilation and affrication in both QF and AF (see e.g., Dumas,

1987; Flikeid, 1984; Poirier, 1994; Poirier, 2009), these linguistic factors do not seem to play a role in the production of the features at hand. I chose to include them, however, because QF and AF both represent dialects where assibilation and affrication occur at extremely high rates, which would negate the restrictions of such factors. Since I have just shown in the overall distribution of my tokens that this is not the case in CF, I contend that one must consider such factors in an initial study. Such consideration helps to delineate the general linguistic parameters for these features in CF.

4.5.1 Phonemic Context as a Linguistic Factor

In order to determine if my selected speakers show preference toward a particular variant based on the token's phonemic context, I noted for each whether or not the token was the result of a voiceless /t/ or voiced /d/ onset as well as the specific variant produced: /t/, /d/, /ts/, /dz/, /tʃ/, or /dʒ/. A word such as *habitude* may thus be realized as any one of the three:

- 1) [abityd] (Occlusive)
- 2) [abitsyd] (Assibilation)
- 3) [abitʃyd] (Affrication)

Despite the fact that these three variations represent different pronunciations, they all reflect the voiceless consonant /t/. The same may go for its voiced counterpart /d/, in a word such as *dire*, which one may hear as [dir], [dzir], or [dʒir]. Dumas (1987) notes that voicing does not play a role in the assibilation of dental consonants in QF. Because no such empirical study exists for CF, however, I believe that it is worth consideration if for no other reason than to establish the same systematic rule for affricate production in CF.

To determine this, I calculated the distribution of my tokens according to their phonemic context.

Table 4.4. Distribution of assibilation and affrication according to voicing context in CF.

	Assibilation		Affrication	
	N	%	N	%
Voiced /d/	708	45%	372	62%
Voiceless /t/	875	55%	228	38%
Total	1,583		600	

As the data in Table 4.4 indicate, phonemic context reveals certain behavioral differences between assibilation and affrication. For example, /t/ is slightly more likely (55%) to become the affricate /ts/ than its voiced counterpart /d/, which my speakers only realized as /dz/ 45% of the time. Therefore it seems that assibilation may occur more commonly in voiceless contexts than in voiced ones. The opposite appears true for affrication, where /d/ becomes /dʒ/ significantly more often than /t/ becomes /tʃ/. I suspect that these findings are skewed, however, because of the word *cadien*. I found no instance of the word *cadien* in which it was not affricated, thus producing each time [kadʒɛ̃]. Because of this, I will reconsider these findings in a more detailed analysis by removing the tokens for *cadien* to see if /d/ still prefers affrication.

4.5.2 Syllable Position as a Linguistic Factor

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, the position of /d/ or /t/ within a given word may have a possible effect on its variant realization. To analyze this possibility, I coded the token's word position for each according to one of three possibilities. In instances where /t/ occurs word initially, such as *typique* ("typical"), I marked it in the 'Beginning' category. *Naturelle* ("natural"), on the other hand, represents a /t/ in the 'Middle' position, and *petite* ("small") is an example at the 'End' of a word. These delineations should not be confused however with the

stop's position within the syllable, as it always serves as the syllable onset no matter where it falls within the overall word structure. Table 4.5 below outlines the distribution of the three variants according to syllable position.

Table 4.5 Distribution of three variants according to syllable position.

	Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
Beginning	2,934 (78%)	1,218 (77%)	299 (50%)
Middle	179 (5%)	53 (3%)	164 (27%)
End	648 (17%)	312 (20%)	137 (23%)
Total	3,761	1,583	600

As Table 4.5 indicates, /t/ and /d/ occurred in the beginning position most often regardless of variant type. In terms of discernible patterns with regard to syllable position, the occlusive and assibilation appeared to behave similarly. For both variants it is the beginning position that occurred the vast majority of the time, while the middle position appeared hardly at all (5% for the occlusive, 3% for assibilation). The percentage of tokens at the end of the word is also similar for both the occlusive and assibilation (17% and 20%, respectively). Affrication, on the other hand, behaved somewhat differently. While it is true that /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ appeared more often at the beginning (50%) than at the middle (27%) or end (23%), it is not nearly as overwhelming as with the other variants. Also, unlike with both the occlusive and assibilation, affrication appears to occur in nearly equal frequency at the middle and end positions. One should be aware, however, that the distribution for affrication seen here includes all instances of the word *cadien*, whose lexicalized affrication I soon discuss in detail in 4.7.

4.6 Variant Distribution in Lafourche and Vermilion

With respect to my location factor, I have already briefly explained earlier in the outline of my methodology that neither assibilation nor affrication play a significant role in the CF of Lafourche and Vermilion parishes. They do exist to some degree, but one should consider these occurrences rare at best. Before going into the specifics of this result, let us look first at the overall distribution of my tokens by location. Table 4.6 below shows the distribution my tokens across all four parishes.

Table 4.6. Distribution of tokens by parish.

Avoyelles	Lafourche	St. Landry	Vermilion
1,699	1,146	2,061	1,038
Number of Tokens: 5,944			

Because of the uncertain nature of these variants and an inability to control with what frequency a particular speaker will use words in which they occur, it was impossible to gather the same number of tokens per parish. Furthermore, the low number of tokens for both Lafourche and Vermilion represent the fact that I discontinued my coding of these two parishes after 9 speakers from each and instead added additional speakers from Avoyelles and St. Landry.

With specific respect to the variant preference of Lafourche and Vermilion CF speakers, I can assert that neither assibilation nor affrication are the preferred pronunciation. To better illustrate this assertion I turn to Table 4.7, which shows high, almost categorical usage of the occlusive variant.

Table 4.7. Distribution of occlusive variant in Lafourche and Vermilion parishes.

Parish	Occlusive Variant		Total
	N	%	
Lafourche	1,119	98	1,146
Vermilion	996	96	1,038

Beginning with Lafourche Parish, one can see that the occlusive variant (98%) dominates the /t,d/ production of that particular speech community. Likewise in Vermilion there seems to be a clear preference for the occlusive variant. At 96%, this parish also shows such a high frequency of the occlusive variant that I contend it is the categorical norm of that region.

Despite the overwhelmingly high frequency with which the occlusive variant appears in both Lafourche and Vermilion, I do have a handful of tokens for assibilation and affrication in these parishes. Although rare, these tokens do offer some interesting details when considered in conjunction my speaker's age.

Table 4.8. Distribution of assibilation and affrication in Lafourche and Vermilion parishes according to generation of speaker.

Parish	Variant	Young	Middle	Old	Total
Lafourche	Assibilation	8	0	0	8
	Affrication	15	3	1	19
	Occlusive	369	368	382	1119
Vermilion	Assibilation	1	0	0	1
	Affrication	21	15	5	41
	Occlusive	426	341	229	996

First, in looking at assibilation, one notices that there are zero tokens among the old and middle generation's speakers from Lafourche. The young generation was the only one of the three to produce any examples of /ts/ or /dz/. Interestingly as well is the fact that these 8 tokens of assibilation came solely from two of the speakers from the young generation, Guillaume (5 tokens) and Philippe (3 tokens). Because the number of tokens still represents a mere 0.7% of the variant production in Lafourche, I do not feel as though one can make any judgment implying that assibilation is a new development among the young speakers. What is certain, however, is that these young speakers clearly did not learn this assibilation from their parents or grandparents. The results from Vermilion Parish are equally indicative of a preference for the occlusive variant. Assibilation (0.1%) only appeared once among a speaker from the young generation (Maurice), which leads me to suspect that it was most likely a mispronunciation.

Secondly, affrication also only rarely occurred in both parishes. In Lafourche, affrication occurred only 19 times and appeared only among 3 of the 9 speakers: Raoul (15 tokens), Christophe (3 tokens), and Armand (1 token). There is a slight spike in the number of tokens among the young at first glance, but this is misleading for two reasons. First, all 15 of the young's tokens are from one speaker (Raoul), so it is not actually representative of the generation as a whole but rather one speaker's articulatory habit. Second, 18 of the 19 tokens of affrication are derivatives of the word *cadien* [kadʒɛ̃], which as I mentioned earlier, most likely represents a lexicalized, fixed-affricate pronunciation. Once one removes these 18 tokens of *cadien* from the equation, it actually appears as though affrication is (with the exception of one token) nonexistent in Lafourche.

In Vermilion, affrication appears slightly higher than it does in Lafourche with 41 tokens (4%). However, the number of tokens for Vermilion can also be misleading. Of those 41 tokens,

39 are the word *cadien*. The other 2 tokens are from Rémi and represent the French word *moitié* [mwatʃje]. I suspect that this example is part of a handful of words that are essentially lexicalized items. At this time I do not currently have enough tokens of these words to fully substantiate such a claim, but my experience listening to these speakers leads me to posit that such an idea is probable. My large number of tokens for *cadien*, however, does allow me to define it as a lexicalized item, which I do shortly in 4.9.

It is thus clear that there is no meaningful geographic distinction in the /t,d/ behavior of Vermilion and Lafourche speakers. In both parishes the occlusive appears most often while assibilation and affrication are almost entirely absent. These results have thus led me to the following conclusion: *the occlusive variant is the norm in Lafourche and Vermilion, and assibilation and affrication (outside of ‘cadien’) are in no meaningful way a part of the CF of these particular regions.*

The data for Lafourche in Table 4.8 also answer a question raised in Chapter 1 regarding the possible origin of assibilation in CF. As I stated in that chapter, Byers (1988) and Rottet (2004) note the morphological similarity between Avoyelles and Lafourche in their preference for the inanimate pronoun *qui* over *quoi*. According to their research, the similar use of *qui* as the inanimate pronoun in Avoyelles and Lafourche is due to their settlement by French Colonials rather than Acadians, who settled in regions like St. Landry and Vermilion and use *quoi*. I hypothesized that if one found a similar pattern with respect to my variants that it could also be due to this settlement pattern. However, this hypothesis was not supported with my study as assibilation and affrication are virtually absent from Lafourche yet, as we will see shortly, relatively abundant in Avoyelles. Otherwise, someone must explain how these parishes would independently maintain the same morphological marker of their French Colonial roots and not a

phonetic marker as well. Assibilation in CF is thus most likely of another origin, although that origin remains unclear at this time.

4.7 Affrication of ‘Cadien’ as a Lexical Item

Affrication is clearly the least preferred of my three variants, having occurred only 10% of the time. Further proof of affrication’s scarcity in these communities lies in the inherent name of this very dialect: *le français cadien*. As I outlined in Chapter 3, the term *cadien* is a truncation of the word *acadien*. While no one is certain of the first use of *cadien*, Henry (1998) notes its written appearance in the late eighteenth century. He also emphasizes that the term is not one that originated from within the speech community but rather was applied to them and eventually adopted by CF speakers to refer to their language and identity. As I coded my speakers, I quickly began to notice that *cadien* represented somewhat of a special case in terms of its type of articulation. Namely, I noted that all speakers in all parishes—regardless of their personal preference towards one variant or another—affricated the term and thus pronounced it categorically as [kadʒɛ̃]. There was not one instance of any other pronunciation of the word. In my coding of CF female speakers I also noticed a similar trend. They, like their male counterparts, exhibited categorical affrication of *cadien*. I am therefore confident in stating that *cadien* does not represent the use of affrication as an independent articulatory process but rather a lexicalized item with a fixed affricate pronunciation.

The fact that several of my speakers affricated *cadien*—even when using affrication nowhere else in their speech—represents further evidence that this is a lexicalized item. I recorded at least one token of affrication for 27 of the 48 speakers being examined here. Of these 27, however, 13 represent speakers whose affrication tokens are entirely composed of *cadien*.

With this in mind, I am thus quite certain that, for these 13 speakers, *cadien* is a lexicalized item that does not entail the affrication of /t/ or /d/ in other words.

Henry's work (1998) on the etymology of *cadien* also supports, at least indirectly, my assertion. Since it is not a word that originated from within the CF speech community but was rather incorporated into the dialect, it is highly plausible that the affrication of *cadien* stems from the original pronunciation in Acadia. The Cajuns may have then adopted the word along with its pronunciation at some point in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Furthermore, I must point out that the English word *Cajun* is also affricated. Thus, there exists a sort of double incentive for this type of lexicalized affrication: 1) the external source of *cadien* and 2) its affrication even in English contexts. This double incentive acts then as reinforcement for a categorical, lexicalized affrication. Such an explanation also justifies why one finds an affricated *cadien* among even those speakers who otherwise do not affricate at all.

To further illustrate the categorical affrication of *cadien*, I isolated these tokens from the rest of those for affrication. Of the 600 tokens of affrication, 228 tokens were *cadien* or a derivation (*cadients*, *cadienne*, *cadienes*). These 228 tokens represent, therefore, 37% of the affrication found in my research. While this is not the majority of affrication tokens, it is a significant enough proportion so as to require removing these tokens from the overall distribution of my tokens. This removal allows for us to see the true frequency with which my CF speakers used affrication resulting from the articulatory process /t,d/ + /i,y/. Table 4.7 below shows this readjusted distribution of tokens without those representing *cadien*.

Table 4.9. Distribution of data according to type of articulation, without *cadien*.

Occlusive	Assibilation	Affrication
3,761 (66%)	1,583 (28%)	372 (7%)
Number of Tokens: 5716		

Taking into account this adjustment, affrication now represents 7% (rather than 10%) of my overall tokens. This new percentage, I contend, is a truer and more accurate depiction of affrication in my four speech communities than the original data shown in Table 4.3. In my analysis of the three variants in Avoyelles and St. Landry I thus make the distinction as to whether or not the data includes *cadien* as part of the tokens of affrication.

CHAPTER 5

VARIATION IN AVOYELLES AND ST. LANDRY

The presence of assibilation and affrication in Lafourche and Vermilion parishes was so scattered that I have labeled the occlusive as not only the prevailing variant but also the standard feature in these regions. The same cannot be said for Avoyelles and St. Landry. As I now demonstrate, both assibilation and affrication play a definitive role in the speech of the CF speakers from these parishes, especially when considered in conjunction with the social and linguistic factors. For my analysis, I have chosen to treat assibilation and affrication separately for three principal reasons. First, as I demonstrate in section 5.2, an analysis of the occlusive variant versus a combined assibilation and affrication leaves several important questions unanswered about their specific behaviors. Secondly, separate analyses of these two features allow me to best determine the degree to which each of them is used in Avoyelles and St. Landry. Third, I am able to more clearly identify the significance of the linguistic and social factors when they are considered independently of one another. I first define the rules which determine each variant; then I compare them to see if assibilation and affrication behave in a similar fashion overall in CF. With respect to affrication, I should reiterate that I have already established that the term *cadien* is a lexicalized item. I have therefore excluded this term, which accounts for nearly half of my affrication tokens, from the ensuing analysis of this variant.

For the analysis of these variants I have chosen to use the program Goldvarb, which allows a user to conduct a multivariate analysis of linguistic forms. In this instance, Goldvarb is able to analyze the different factors surrounding the use of each of my three variants. Most importantly, Goldvarb allows me to see which of my linguistic and social factors are significant to the production and usage (and to what degree) of these variants. In other words, Goldvarb

determines which of my coded factors favor or disfavor the presence of one variant. Being a binary statistical program, Goldvarb shows the saliency of one variant versus another variant or set of variants. In my case, I analyze four combinations: 1) the saliency of the occlusive versus assibilation and affrication, 2) the saliency of assibilation versus the occlusive, 3) the saliency of affrication versus the occlusive, and 4) that of affrication versus assibilation.

5.1 Variant Distribution in Avoyelles and St. Landry

Before delving into the statistical analyses of assibilation and affrication in these two parishes, I must begin with an outline of the overall distribution of my three variants in Avoyelles and St. Landry. Table 5.1 highlights the variation of /t/ and /d/ in these parishes.

Table 5.1. Distribution of three variants in Avoyelles and St. Landry parishes.

Parish	Variant	Total
Avoyelles	Occlusive	1,087 (64%)
	Assibilation	467 (28%)
	Affrication	136 (8%)
		<hr/> 1,690 (100%)
St. Landry	Occlusive	559 (29%)
	Assibilation	1,107 (58%)
	Affrication	236 (13%)
		<hr/> 1,902 (100%)

As Table 5.1 indicates, both Avoyelles and St. Landry show a large degree of variation between assibilation, affrication, and the occlusive pronunciation. While the occlusive variant is still the preferred pronunciation (64%) in Avoyelles, it is by no means a categorical feature of the area as

is the case in Lafourche and Vermilion. Rather, it coexists alongside assibilation, which at 28% of the tokens, appears relatively frequently in Avoyelles. Affrication, on the other hand, is the least predominant variant in this parish, at 8%.

Out of my four selected parishes, St. Landry differs significantly in that it is the only one in which the occlusive is not the predominant variant. Rather, assibilation occurred at the highest frequency, representing 58% of the tokens, while the occlusive represents 29% and affrication 13%. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, Picone and Valdman (2005) assert that assibilation in CF is a feature unique to Evangeline Parish. With roughly 1,100 tokens of assibilation from St. Landry however, I can attest to its prominence in regions other than Evangeline. I must note, nevertheless, that St. Landry shares its entire western border with Evangeline. Even so, these results stand as the first quantitative proof of assibilation as a noted feature of another parish besides Evangeline. St. Landry is also unique in its high level of variation between the three variants. Unlike in Lafourche, Vermilion, and even to some extent in Avoyelles, the three variants in St. Landry all occurred in substantial quantities. This suggests that St. Landry may perhaps represent a type of linguistic crossroads in CF where various features exist simultaneously.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis of the Occlusive

Since this is the first study to quantify the usages of both assibilation and affrication in CF, I would like to begin by examining their behavior versus that of the norm, the occlusive. In doing so, we can determine the linguistic and social factors that contribute to the production of this norm as well as quantifiably see the conditions under which CF speakers are more likely to produce /t/ and /d/ over either of the affricate pairs. Table 5.2 below shows the results of variant

rules analysis of the occlusive variant versus assibilation and affrication, which I conducted using the aforementioned statistical program Goldvarb.

Table 5.2. Goldvarb analysis of factors contributing to the probability of the occlusive variant over assibilation and affrication in CF.

Occlusive versus Assibilation and Affrication Input = 0.421, Total <i>N</i> = 3760, Sig. = 0.000			
	FW	%	<i>N</i>
Phonemic Context			
/t/	.430	47	659/1750
/d/	.561	53	987/2010
Range	13		
Syllable Position			
Beginning	.517	73	1255/2763
Middle	.361	7	70/249
End	.483	20	321/748
Range	16		
Generation			
Young	.315	31	327/1160
Middle	.468	35	552/1314
Old	.697	34	767/1286
Range	38		
Location			
St. Landry	.309	55	559/2061
Avoyelles	.726	45	1087/1699
Range	42		

In first looking at the linguistic factors considered, one can see that phonemic context, which indicates voicing in this case, is significant to the production of the occlusive. Specifically, voiced /d/ slightly favors the occlusive while its voiceless counterpart, /t/, disfavors the variant's usage. This is not surprising given the fact that other studies (see e.g. Hall & Hamann, 2006; Zygis, 2008; Zygis, Fuchs, & Koenig, 2012) have shown assibilation and affrication to be more

common in voiceless contexts than in voiced ones²⁹. Goldvarb equally determined that syllable position—i.e. the position of /t/ or /d/ within the lexeme—is also statistically significant to the preference of the occlusive over assibilation and affrication. The middle position (e.g. *attirer* “to attract”) uniquely disfavors the presence of the occlusive while both the beginning (e.g. *dire* “to say”) and the end (*habitude* “usually”) neither favor nor disfavor its usage.

In turning to the social factors considered in this study, Goldvarb indicates that both age and location are significant to the use of the occlusive over assibilation and affrication in CF. In fact, these constraints have the two highest ranges—38 and 42, respectively. Beginning with age, the young generation appears to strongly disfavor (.315) the use of the occlusive while the old strongly favor it (.697). At the same time, the middle generation shows to neither favor nor disfavor its usage (.468). I would argue that the favorability of the occlusive among old speakers only adds to the validity of my assertion that it represents the norm in CF. Conversely, the decrease in the occlusive’s prevalence among the young indicates a potential and yet undeterminable change in their use of these variants.

Location is the most significant contributor to the presence of the occlusive in these CF communities. As Table 5.2 indicates, Avoyelles’ CF speakers strongly favor the occlusive (.726) while those from St. Landry strongly disfavor it (.309). These results are easily explained when one recalls that St. Landry is the parish in which one finds the lowest percentage of the occlusive (and, in turn, highest percentages of assibilation and affrication). Therefore, it is not surprising that this parish’s speakers disfavor the occlusive overall. In Avoyelles, on the other hand, where one finds more instances of the occlusive, this variant enjoys a strong statistical favorability.

²⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the role of voicing in affricate production, see section 5.5.

As I have just demonstrated, there is a wealth of information that can be gleaned by examining the above results juxtaposing the occlusive with assibilation and affrication. However, I contend that further analyses, in which we consider assibilation and affrication independently of one another, are necessary for two primary reasons. First, in my study there are many more tokens for assibilation than affrication, which could have in turn skewed the above results in assibilation's favor. Thus, the results above indicating that, for example, the occlusive disfavors the middle position, might not truly mean that both assibilation and affrication alternatively favor it. Rather, assibilation could be overshadowing the tokens of affrication and forcing the results in that direction. Secondly, I have already shown that these are separate processes that have various different linguistic, social, and geographic constraints. The most glaring example of this lies in the lexicalization of *cadien*, which necessitates a special handling of affrication. Therefore, I will now move to separate analyses comparing assibilation and affrication to the occlusive so as to determine the specific factors that contribute to their usage in CF.

5.3 Quantitative Analysis of Assibilation

Moving now to the second of my four statistical analyses conducted in this chapter, Goldvarb determined that three of my factors—one linguistic and two social—are statistically significant to the use of assibilation over the occlusive variant in CF. Specifically, Table 5.3 below shows the results of a variable rules analysis of factors contributing to the probability of assibilation over the occlusive in Avoyelles and St. Landry.

Table 5.3. Goldvarb analysis of factors contributing to the probability of assibilation over the occlusive variant in CF. (Syllable Position as a factor was rejected by the program.)

Assibilation versus Occlusive Input = 0.487, Total <i>N</i> = 3220, Sig. = 0.000			
	FW	%	<i>N</i>
Phonemic Context			
/t/	.582	47	868/1527
/d/	.426	53	706/1693
Range	15		
Syllable Position			
Beginning	(Not sig.)	77	1209/2464
Middle	(Not sig.)	4	53/123
End	(Not sig.)	19	312/633
Range			
Generation			
Young	.694	31	668/995
Middle	.510	33	507/1059
Old	.324	36	399/1166
Range	37		
Location			
St. Landry	.695	52	1107/1666
Avoyelles	.293	48	467/1554
Range	41		

In first considering the two linguistic factors, the data above indicate that the voiceless consonant /t/ favors assibilation while its voiced counterpart /d/ conversely slightly disfavors the feature. Goldvarb determined that syllable position, on the other hand, has no bearing on the likelihood of assibilation over the occlusive.

With respect to my social factors, which are the most significant of all based on their high ranges, the age of the speaker appears to play a large role in determining whether or not they favor assibilation. The young, for example, show a very high preference toward assibilation. The old generation, on the other hand, strongly disfavors the use of assibilation in their speech to

such a degree that it mostly represents an anomaly. The middle generation remains neutral in their use of assibilation and the occlusive. Most importantly, these results demonstrate that the use of assibilation is on the rise with each successive generation. While the old generation strongly disfavors it, as the age of the speaker gets younger there is a corresponding increase in their use of assibilation.

Geographic location appears without a doubt to be the most significant of all of my factors. With a range of 41, St. Landry shows a clear, strong preference (.695) for /ts/ and /dz/, while Avoyelles' speakers clearly disfavor assibilation (.293). These results serve to substantiate two important claims regarding assibilation in CF. First, despite the qualitative reports of Picone and Valdman (2005) and Russell (2010), assibilation is not a feature restricted solely to Evangeline Parish. Rather, my data serve as quantitative proof that it is in fact the predominant feature of St. Landry as well. Secondly, these results demonstrate that St. Landry is the only one of my four parishes whose speakers favor assibilation to either affrication or the occlusive. Location is thus the most significant factor of my study with St. Landry representing where one finds the most frequent usage of assibilation in CF.

Having established location as the strongest determiner of assibilation preference over the occlusive in CF, I would like to return to my age factor to establish its independence from the location factor. I can thusly determine whether or not the pattern of usage that I find for St. Landry and Avoyelles is verifiable within each generation, and if the age pattern—that young speakers are more likely than old to favor assibilation—holds true at the parish level. To accomplish this, I cross-tabulated the data for my location and age factors, which Table 5.4 outlines below.

Table 5.4. Cross-tabulation of location and age factors for preference of assibilation over the occlusive in CF.

	St. Landry		Avoyelles		Σ	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Young						
Assibilation	432	79	236	53	668	67
Occlusive	114	21	213	47	327	33
Σ	546		449		995	
Middle						
Assibilation	379	78	128	22	507	48
Occlusive	107	22	445	78	552	52
Σ	486		573		1059	
Old						
Assibilation	296	47	103	19	399	34
Occlusive	338	53	429	81	767	66
Σ	634		532		1166	

I have already determined that overall the old generation uses assibilation the least often with a steady increase between each subsequent generation. In separating the data for each parish, however, it becomes clear that this pattern does not fully hold true. It remains true that both the young generation from St. Landry and that from Avoyelles demonstrate the highest usage of assibilation in their parishes. In St. Landry, however, this high preference for assibilation in the young (79%) is effectively identical among its middle generation (78%). Given this similarity, it appears more appropriate to state that the old generation behaves in an outlying manner by using assibilation roughly half (47%) of the time.

The Avoyelles generations exhibit the opposite from St. Landry. In Avoyelles, where assibilation is not the predominant feature, it is rather the old (19%) and middle (22%) generations who behave in a similar manner while the young (53%) represent the outliers. Therefore, it is most appropriate to describe assibilation according to the following contextual rules: 1) Avoyelles' old and middle generations behave similarly while the young demonstrate a

sharp increase in assibilation use. 2) In St. Landry this sharp increase occurs between the old and middle generations, which results in a similarly high rate of assibilation between middle and young speakers. Regardless, it is clear that age plays a determinant role in the use of assibilation.

With these results in mind, we may now return to my question of factor independence. It is clear that location plays a strong independent role in the preference of assibilation over the occlusive. In all three generations, St. Landry's CF speakers are more likely to assibilate than those from Avoyelles. The effect of location therefore holds true independently of age. Age also plays a role in the preference of assibilation over the occlusive, but its effect, or rather the direction of its effect, seems to be dependent on the location factor. Middle-aged CF speakers in St. Landry behave like the young, while Avoyelles' middle-aged speakers behave like the old.

In turning back now to the significance of phonemic context, where I noted that voiceless /t/ favors assibilation (.582) while the voiced /d/ disfavors (.426) it, I want to determine whether or not this holds true independently of my location factor. Theoretically, one should find more assibilation with /t/ than with /d/ in both Avoyelles and St. Landry despite the fact that Avoyelles' speakers disfavor the variant overall. Results are displayed in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5. Cross-tabulation of phonemic context and location for assibilation over the occlusive in CF.

	/t/		/d/		Σ	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
St. Landry						
Assibilation	640	80	467	54	1107	66
Occlusive	160	20	399	46	559	34
Σ	800		866		1666	
Avoyelles						
Assibilation	228	31	239	29	467	30
Occlusive	499	69	588	71	1087	70
Σ	727		827		1554	

This pattern holds true for St. Landry, where one finds a higher percentage of t-assibilation (80%) than in /d/ words (54%). However, CF speakers in Avoyelles do not show this preference. The consonant /d/ appears at similarly low rates (29% and 31% respectively) in Avoyelles. These nearly identical low rates of assibilation for both /t/ and /d/ in Avoyelles do not seem therefore to follow the overall pattern stated previously.

I contend that such a small difference between /t/ and /d/ assibilation in Avoyelles is primarily owed to the fact that this parish's speakers strongly favor the occlusive overall. We are therefore working with a smaller representation of the CF-speaking population who prefers assibilation compared to St. Landry. Given this fact, I can state that the rule for phonemic context is dependent on location and only applies to St. Landry, where one finds an abundance of assibilation. In parishes like Avoyelles where assibilation is disfavored, this preference for assibilated /t/ over /d/ does not apply because of the low frequency with which CF speakers use the variant and thus restrict this contextual rule.

In an effort to more fully understand the significance of both age and the role of phonemic context in the use of assibilation, I decided to cross-tabulate the data for these two factors. Since I have already proven that the phonemic context rule only applies to St. Landry, I have excluded the data from Avoyelles. This allows us to determine whether or not St. Landry's generations prefer assibilation for /t/ over /d/, which would suggest the independence of this factor from age. Table 5.6 displays these results.

Table 5.6. Cross-tabulation of age factor and phonemic context for assibilation in St. Landry.

	/t/		/d/		Σ	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Young						
Assibilation	238	83	194	75	432	79
Occlusive	48	17	66	25	114	21
Σ	286		260		546	
Middle						
Assibilation	224	82	155	72	379	78
Occlusive	48	18	59	28	107	22
Σ	272		214		486	
Old						
Assibilation	178	74	118	30	296	47
Occlusive	64	26	274	70	338	53
Σ	242		392		634	

As Table 5.6 indicates, the preference of assibilated /t/ over that of /d/ remains true independently of the age factor. One can see that /t/ is assibilated more often than /d/ in both the middle and young generations where this variant is favored overall. Furthermore, there remains a higher percentage of t-assibilation than /d/ among the old generation despite the fact this generation uses assibilation less frequently than the other two. Therefore, the phonemic context rule stating that /t/ assibilates more often than /d/, while contextually limited by location, is not innately limited by the age factor. It is interesting to note, nonetheless, that as the rate of overall assibilation increases among the middle and young generations, so does the rate of d-assibilation. This suggests that, as assibilation becomes more common in St. Landry, the phonemic rule's importance will decrease. Assibilation will freely occur with words containing /t/ and /d/ regardless of voicing because the variant will have become so prevalent.

To elaborate upon this last point, I would finally argue that these results serve as evidence that the young generation, in an example of phonetic innovation, is actually expanding their usage of assibilation. While there are clear discrepancies between the old generation's

assibilation of /t/ and /d/, the middle and young generations show a decrease in the gap between these phonemes' rates of assibilation. In effect, the middle and young speakers have taken a feature that is largely restricted to the voiceless context among the old and extended its usage to include voiced /d/. Such a trend is significant if for no other reason than the fact that it serves as an example of internal innovation in the midst of language shift and death. One might expect the middle and young speakers, whose level of fluency does not typically equal that of the older generation and whose French usage is the most restricted, to exhibit the most variation. However, since their usage is so high, there is no room for conditioning.

To summarize, I have uncovered rules explaining how certain linguistic and social factors contribute to the preference of assibilation over the occlusive in these CF communities. First, Goldvarb determined that syllable position plays no quantifiable role in the use of assibilation over the occlusive. My other linguistic factor, phonemic context, does have an influence on assibilation usage. In general one can say that /t/ favors assibilation while /d/ does not. This rule is dependent upon location, however, and does not apply to Avoyelles. In St. Landry, the phonemic context rule is clear: /t/ favors assibilation more than /d/ among all speakers regardless of age. The overall proclivity towards an assibilated /d/ does increase among the middle and young speakers, however, which suggests that this rule may one day cease to be applicable.

Finally, both of my social factors proved to be the most influential with regard to assibilation. Location is without a doubt the most important factor contributing to assibilation's presence and frequency. It is highly favored in St. Landry while disfavored in Avoyelles. I have proven the independence of this factor by showing that there is more assibilation in St. Landry than in Avoyelles among each generation. Age also contributes to the variant's usage, however, it is dependent to some degree on location. In St. Landry, one finds a similar rate of assibilation

between the middle and young, while in Avoyelles it is the old and middle generations that behave alike. In light of this evidence, I would like to turn now to affrication to determine whether or not there are any similarities between the two variants' behavior in CF.

5.4 Quantitative Analysis of Affrication

With respect to Avoyelles and St. Landry, I accrued 372 tokens of affrication. This number excludes the 228 tokens of affricated *cadien* for reasons previously stated. Despite this somewhat low number of tokens for affrication, I still contend that there are a sufficient number of occurrences to test the significance of my various factors for this feature. The results of the Goldvarb analysis are outlined below in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7. Goldvarb analysis of factors contributing to the probability of affrication over the occlusive variant in CF.

Affrication versus Occlusive Input = 0.135, Total <i>N</i> = 2018, Sig. = 0.008			
	FW	%	<i>N</i>
Phonemic Context			
/t/	.609	44	223/882
/d/	.415	56	149/1136
Range	19		
Syllable Position			
Beginning	.509	77	298/1553
Middle	.654	5	29/99
End	.420	18	45/366
Range	23		
Generation			
Young	.596	21	93/420
Middle	.691	38	214/766
Old	.281	41	65/832
Range	41		
Location			
St. Landry	.725	39	236/795
Avoyelles	.348	61	136/1223
Range	38		

Based on the above results, two linguistic factors are significant to the preference of affrication over the occlusive variant. With respect to phonemic context, voiceless /t/ favors affrication while /d/ slightly disfavors the variant. Syllable position, which denotes the syllable in which I found one of the variants, is significant with regard to affrication. Here, the middle position (e.g. **édu**quer (*to educate*), **natur**el (*natural*), **polit**icien (*politician*)) shows a strong favorability (.654) towards affrication. The beginning position (e.g. **di**re (*to say*), **tir**er (*to shoot*), **tu** (*you*)) neither favors nor disfavors (.509) it. And, the end position (e.g. **partir** (*to leave*), **samedi** (*Saturday*), **habitu**de (*usually*)) shows a moderate disfavor (.420) towards affrication over the occlusive.

In looking at the sheer number of tokens for the syllable factor, it is apparent that there are many more tokens for the beginning position than for either the middle or the end. This uneven distribution led me to wonder: is affrication then somewhat conditioned by lexical frequency? In other words, is syllable position a factor that independently affects affrication, or is it rather the result of certain words that affricate at a higher frequency than others? To answer this question, I returned to my coding sheets to examine affricated words at all three positions.

For the middle position, which favors affrication, I found 15 different affricated words for the 29 tokens. Certain words like *moitié* (“half,” 6 occurrences) and *graduer* (“to graduate,” 5 occurrences) appeared at a higher frequency than others, however. I also noted 14 different affricated words for the end position (45 tokens), which slightly disfavors affrication. This position includes high frequency words like *petit* (“small,” 21 occurrences) and *habitude* (“usually,” 10 occurrences). Even in the beginning position, which had a large number of tokens (298), I discovered that certain affricated words appeared more often than others. I noted that

139 of the beginning syllable tokens occurred with the second-person singular pronoun *tu*, which thusly accounts for approximately 47% of the tokens in the beginning position.

The abundance of certain high frequency affricated words has led me to make certain conclusions about the independence of syllable position as a linguistic factor. First, I should clarify that the disproportionate number of tokens for each position does not change the Goldvarb results, but it does help to explain them. For the beginning position, which Goldvarb determined neither favors nor disfavors affrication, I discovered that *tu* is affricated at a very high rate. However, this high frequency word is counterbalanced by both the affricated and non-affricated usages of many other lexemes. Therefore, despite the fact that *tu* affricates at high frequency, the other words neutralize the saliency of this position.

For the middle (favors affrication) and end (disfavors) positions, I also noted that there are certain affricated words that occurred more often than the rest. Because of the small number of tokens for these categories, these high frequency words carry a greater weight than those at the beginning. I do not wish to imply that these words are themselves lexicalized items (as is the case with *cadien*), because they also often occur in occlusive and assibilated contexts. But, I contend that their high frequency usage in the affricated form signifies a somewhat different type of affrication than the simple articulatory process outlined in Chapter 3.

The realizations above lead to the information represented in Table 5.8, which shows the five words that were affricated most often in Avoyelles and St. Landry. These words make up 256 of the 372 tokens of affrication in the two parishes.

Table 5.8. Five most commonly affricated words in Avoyelles and St. Landry.

Word	Number of Tokens
tu (<i>you</i>)	139 (37%)
du (<i>from, of</i>)	47 (13%)
dire ³⁰ (<i>to say, to tell</i>)	33 (9%)
petit (<i>little, small</i>)	21 (6%)
Dieu (<i>God</i>)	16 (4%)

The above words, while by no means categorically affricated, appear in this form at a high frequency and thus have at least some bearing on the independence of syllable position as a linguistic factor. This behavior contrasts that of assibilation, which shows no sign of lexicalization or high frequency assibilated words.

Both social factors—generation and location—proved to be the most important with respective ranges of 41 and 38. Beginning with the age factor, it is the old generation that shows a strong disfavor (.281) for affrication over the occlusive. With respect to the other two generations, these results highlight two key facts: 1) both the middle (.691) and young (.596) generations favor affrication, but 2) the middle generation favors affrication more than the young. They are thus stronger users of this feature. In order to determine whether or not this favorability among the young and middle generations is independent of any other factors I will shortly be examining the age factor in conjunction with my other linguistic and social factors.

³⁰ Because no matter the tense or conjugation the /d/ always remains at the beginning of the word, I have listed here solely the infinitive form. However, these 33 tokens represent myriad conjugations of the verb (e.g. *dis, dites, disaient, disions, direz*).

First, however, it is important to note that St. Landry is once again the parish that requires the most focus. CF speakers from St. Landry show a strong proclivity toward affrication (.725) while Avoyelles' CF population represents the direct opposite (.348). Therefore, it is possible that the generational pattern—affrication disfavored among old but favored among middle and young speakers—is not actually true overall but dependent on location.

In order to determine the independence of my generational pattern, I cross-tabulated my age factor with location (see Table 5.9 below). This allows me to determine if this pattern is truly representative of the variant's usage, or if it is merely dependent on one parish's CF speakers.

Table 5.9. Cross-tabulation of age factor with location for affrication in CF.

	Avoyelles		St. Landry		Σ	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Young						
Affrication	59	22	34	23	93	18
Occlusive	213	78	114	77	327	78
Σ	272		148		420	
Middle						
Affrication	69	13	145	58	214	28
Occlusive	445	87	107	42	552	72
Σ	514		252		766	
Old						
Affrication	8	2	57	14	65	8
Occlusive	429	98	338	86	767	92
Σ	437		395		832	

First, one can see that the old generation affricates the least overall when the data for both parishes are combined. Upon separation, the low rate of affrication in Avoyelles' old speakers (a mere 2%) is striking. Further study of the low rate of affrication in Avoyelles' old generation revealed that half of these 8 tokens came from one individual (Joachim, born 1912). The remaining 4 tokens came from Raymond (2 tokens), Joseph (1 token), and Eugène (1 token). The

fifth member of my old generation from Avoyelles, Omer, did not affricate at all. Since I noted only 8 occurrences, half of which come from one individual, I conclude that affrication is extremely rare in the speech of Avoyelles' older CF speakers outside the context of *cadien*.

With regard to the initial remark that the middle generation favors affrication more than the young and old, I can make two immediate observations: 1) this pattern only applies to the speakers from St. Landry. There, both the middle and young generations favor affrication, but the middle (58%) favors its usage much more than the young (23%) do. 2) Avoyelles' speakers do not follow this pattern. The young in Avoyelles favor affrication more than both the middle and old. Instead, this parish's speakers appear to follow the generational pattern noted for assibilation in which the variant's usage increases as the age of the speaker decreases. The spike in middle generation affrication uniquely stems from St. Landry, whose middle generation affricates (at 58%) not only more than Avoyelles' middle-aged speakers (13%) but also more than any other generation in either parish.

This unusual behavior among St. Landry's middle generation speakers brought up an important question that led me to once again return to my coding sheets: is the 58% affrication among middle-aged speakers in St. Landry truly representative of this generation's behavior? I discovered that, of the 145 tokens of affrication, 131 are actually from one speaker (Placido, born 1950). The remaining 14 tokens of affrication are spread more or less evenly among the other 4 speakers from the middle generation. The sharp increase of affrication among middle generation speakers in St. Landry is therefore actually due to the speech of one individual rather than indicative of any trend among this age of speakers as a whole. In fact, upon removing Placido's tokens (131 affrication, 34 occlusive), the distribution of affrication (young, 23%; middle, 16%;

old, 14%) becomes more similar to that of Avoyelles' speakers. Once these recalculations are made, the young in both parishes affricate at a higher rate than the middle and old generations.

Elaborating upon these new details, one sees that the following generational pattern does indeed appear more or less accurate for affrication: the young generation affricates to a higher degree than the middle, who affricates at rates similar or slightly higher than the old generation. In other words, affrication increases in usage as the age of the speaker becomes younger. The young generation in both parishes even affricate at near identical levels (22% in Avoyelles, 23% in St. Landry). This indicates that affrication is not only slightly on the rise in these communities but is also attaining some level of similar usage in the northern parishes. More importantly, this information indicates that the generational pattern occurs independently of the location factor.

For phonemic context, my Goldvarb analysis indicated that CF speakers are more likely to affricate /t/ (.609) than /d/ (.415), which was also the case with assibilation in St. Landry. To determine whether or not this trend is independent of the effects of other factors, I examined the affrication of /t/ and /d/ within each generation of speakers, shown in Table 5.10 below.

Table 5.10. Cross-tabulation of phonemic context with age factor for affrication in CF.

	/t/		/d/		Σ	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Old						
Affrication	29	10	36	6	65	8
Occlusive	249	90	518	94	767	92
Σ	278		554		832	
Middle						
Affrication	136	36	78	20	214	28
Occlusive	244	64	308	80	552	72
Σ	380		386		766	
Young						
Affrication	58	26	35	18	93	22
Occlusive	166	74	161	82	327	78
Σ	224		196		420	

As Table 5.10 illustrates, CF speakers consistently affricate the voiceless consonant /t/ more often than its voiced counterpart, /d/. This is true not only when the tokens are considered as a whole but also within each respective generation. I also considered the significance of /t/ and /d/ at the parish level, where I found that CF speakers affricated /t/ more often than they did /d/ in both Avoyelles and St. Landry. Therefore, I can establish the following general rule: CF speakers in both parishes and within each generation favor the affrication of /t/ more than /d/.

Additionally, this rule occurs independently of location.

Having now established the independence of phonemic context as a linguistic factor, I would like to see if it could help illuminate the significance of syllable position. I have already commented on the low number of tokens for certain syllable positions and the high volume of tokens from a restricted number of words. There does nevertheless appear to exist a potential relationship between this factor and affricate usage. Of particular importance is the fact that Goldvarb showed that words in the middle position strongly favor affrication while those at the beginning neither favor nor disfavor the variant.

Having already established the rule that /t/ strongly favors affrication while /d/ does not, I cross-tabulated this factor with the syllable position to determine the independence of the syllable pattern. These results are found in Table 5.11 below. If /t/ in the middle position strongly favors affrication, while in the beginning position shows no favorability and at the end disfavors it, I believe that one can argue that the syllable pattern is independently applicable to affrication usage in CF.

Table 5.11. Cross-tabulation of syllable position with phonemic context for affrication in CF.

	/t/		/d/		Σ	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Beginning						
Affrication	177	29	121	13	298	19
Occlusive	437	71	818	87	1255	81
Σ	614		939		1553	
Middle						
Affrication	17	27	12	33	29	29
Occlusive	46	73	24	67	70	71
Σ	63		36		99	
End						
Affrication	223	25	149	13	372	18
Occlusive	659	75	987	87	1646	82
Σ	882		1136		2018	

Based on the cross-tabulation illustrated in Table 5.11, I note two important observations: 1) /t/ favors affrication more than /d/ when they occur at the beginning and end of a word. 2) In the middle position, /t/ and /d/ behave similarly, and do not respect the general rule for phonemic context. I attribute the differing behavior of the middle position to the fact that it uniquely favors affrication over the occlusive. Therefore, phonemic context is dependent on the level of favorability of a given syllable position. In occurrences at the beginning and end of words, where affrication is not favored, phonemic context will determine affrication. This explains why both of these positions show nearly identical rates of affrication for /t/ and /d/.

For the preference of affrication over the occlusive, each of my linguistic and social factors have thus proven significant in determining the behavior of this variant in these CF communities. Once again, the social factors of location and age proved to be the most illuminating through their high ranges and independent patterns. Beginning with location, I can state that one most often finds affrication in the speech CF speakers from St. Landry while

Avoyelles' speakers disfavor the feature. With respect to age as a social factor, there are differences between my three generations that lead me to the following contextual rule: one most often finds affrication in the speech of young CF speakers while their older counterparts generally disfavor the feature. With the exception of one middle-aged speaker (Placido) from St. Landry, this rule holds true even at the parish level. The young also affricate at similar rates in both parishes.

Both of my linguistic factors are also relevant to the preference of /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ over the occlusive. In the case of phonemic context, CF speakers affricate /t/ more often than /d/, and this occurs independent of location. Furthermore, this rule regarding phonemic context remains true with the exception of one instance, which brings us to my other linguistic factor: syllable position. This factor proved to be a determinant aspect of affricate production. In particular, the middle-word position generally favors affrication. At the same time, those occurrences at the beginning and end do not typically favor it. In those instances where affrication does occur, one is more likely to see it with /t/ than /d/. Because of the middle position's proclivity towards affrication, though, phonemic context does not have an effect here. Thus, phonemic context dictates that /t/ affricates more often than /d/ except in the middle position. There, one finds a high degree of affrication regardless of phonemic context. The stability of this rule remains unclear, however, since affrication also appears to exhibit a moderate to high degree of lexicalization.

In an effort to determine whether or not one can establish any commonality in the behavior of affrication and assibilation, I decided next to run a Goldvarb analysis comparing these two variants with one another. Said analysis also allows us to see if affrication is competing against assibilation for /t,d/ articulation. A negative result will suggest that the two

variants are indeed separate processes that exist simultaneously yet independently, each in competition with the standard form. Since I have already determined that Placido is not representative of his speech community, I have excluded him from the following analysis shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12. Goldvarb analysis of factors contributing to the probability of affrication over assibilation in CF.

Affrication versus Assibilation			
Input = 0.116, Total <i>N</i> = 1815, Sig. = 0.014			
	FW	%	<i>N</i>
Phonemic Context			
/t/	.539	56	151/1019
/d/	.450	44	90/796
Range	9		
Syllable Position			
Beginning	.494	76	176/1385
Middle	.789	5	29/82
End	.447	19	36/348
Range	34		
Generation			
Young	(Not sig.)	42	93/761
Middle	(Not sig.)	32	83/590
Old	(Not sig.)	36	65/464
Range			
Location			
St. Landry	.405	67	105/1212
Avoyelles	.684	33	136/603
Range	27		

Beginning with the linguistic factors, the above analysis indicates that phonemic context is not significant to any substantial degree. With such a low range (9), this factor does not really

influence the use of affrication over assibilation. At the same time, this low range also indicates that these variants are not competing with one another for /t/ and /d/.

Syllable position appears at first glance to be significant in the overall preference of affrication. The middle position shows a strong favorability (.789) for the variant. When I tested affrication versus the occlusive, the middle position also favored affrication. These results therefore only reinforce the general syllable pattern for affrication, which acknowledges its influence on the middle position and lack thereof for occurrences in the beginning and end positions.

The insignificance of age as a social factor equally demonstrates that affrication and assibilation are not in competition with one another. Location does, however, display some intriguing results. Goldvarb determined here that Avoyelles' speakers show a strong preference (.684) for affrication over assibilation in comparison to those speakers from St. Landry (.405). This does not indicate, however, that Avoyelles' speakers prefer affrication overall. I have already established that they prefer the occlusive. Rather, it merely indicates that they choose affrication over assibilation more often than speakers from St. Landry, who prefer to assibilate. Location is thus significant here in terms of the divergent behaviors of these two parishes' speakers. But, it does not indicate that affrication and assibilation are competing against one another overall. These variants are separate processes, and they occur according to the specific linguistic and social rules that govern their usage.

5.5 Discussion of Results

These Goldvarb analyses have illuminated the relevance of my linguistic and social factors in the usage patterns of Avoyelles and St. Landry's speakers. First and foremost, location plays an important and similar role for both assibilation and affrication. One is more likely to

find both variants in St. Landry than in Avoyelles. With regard to assibilation, I have demonstrated that location is the most significant factor and occurs independently of any other. Speakers in St. Landry are more likely to assibilate than those from Avoyelles regardless of age, for example. For affrication, it also occurs most often in St. Landry independent of other factors. But, the young speakers in both parishes demonstrate a similar usage rate, which suggests that age and location are becoming interdependent.

Age also has a significant effect on both phenomena. Young speakers are most likely to use assibilation and affrication, and there is a decrease in usage among older CF speakers in these parishes. For assibilation, this factor is dependent on location. I have established different behaviors for the middle generation in the two parishes. In Avoyelles, the middle generation behaves like the old speakers, while in St. Landry the middle assibilates at an equally high rate as that of the young. I attribute this difference to the overall disfavor of assibilation in Avoyelles, which justifies the equally low rates among the old and middle generations. At the same time, the middle and young speakers in St. Landry behave similarly because of the feature's status as the prevailing variant. For affrication, age is not dependent on location. In both parishes there is a successive increase in the rate of /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ between the generations. This increase excepts Placido, a speaker whose predilection for affrication is not indicative of his generation or parish but requires some other explanation.

In terms of linguistic factors, phonemic context is significant in the usages of both assibilation and affrication. In both instances, /t/ is generally more likely to assibilate/affricate than /d/ (FW = .582 for assibilation, .609 for affrication). For assibilation, this rule only applies to St. Landry, however. Both /t/ and /d/ assibilate with similar infrequency in Avoyelles. This is

most likely due to the variant's overall disfavor in that parish. My analysis of affrication demonstrated that /t/ always affricates more than /d/ independent of any other factor.

The results for phonemic context force me now to confront an important question: why does /t/ assibilate or affricate more often than /d/? Upon researching the influence of voicing on the articulatory process involved in assibilation and affrication, I found that my results are in fact in line with the work of other linguists. Hall and Hamann (2006) found in their study of these variants (in more than 30 languages) that /t/ affricates more often than /d/. They furthermore found that /d/ can only affricate if /t/ does as well. They conclude that the reason for this lies in the articulatory process occurring. For the voiceless stop /t/, more air accumulates in the vocal tract, which in turn causes more friction to be generated. Conversely, the voiced /d/ results in less air pressure and thus makes it more difficult to affricate. They also cite an increased pharyngeal expansion in voiced contexts, which “results in less air pressure at the constriction and less friction at the stop release” (p. 1217). Other linguistic studies also provide similar explanations for the infrequency of /d/ affrication (see e.g., Zygis, 2008; Zygis, Fuchs, & Koenig, 2012). Having shown that /t/ affricates more often than /d/ in CF, my results add to these studies' findings.

Finally, my analyses of assibilation and affrication showed that syllable position plays divergent roles for each variant. Goldvarb determined that this linguistic factor is insignificant to the preference of assibilation over the occlusive in Avoyelles and St. Landry. For affrication versus both the occlusive and assibilation, however, syllable position is a significant factor. The middle position uniquely favors the use of affrication, while the beginning and end positions do not. I hesitate to solidify this as a hard and fast rule for two main reasons. First, I noted comparatively fewer tokens for the middle and end positions than I did for the beginning.

Secondly, affrication in these CF communities seems to be highly lexicalized. This is true not only for the word *cadien*, but I also found that my 372 tokens of affrication show a disproportionately high frequency of certain words. I contend therefore that affrication in CF is more a lexical phenomenon than assibilation, which represents an articulatory process governed by distinct phonological rules.

To summarize, my analysis permits me to make four conclusive observations regarding these variants' usages in Avoyelles and St. Landry:

- Location is the most important factor and has an independent effect on these variants' presence in CF.
- The young generation typically favors both assibilation and affrication more than the old and middle generations.
- The voiceless consonant /t/ generally shows a higher inclination towards assibilation and affrication than /d/, which corresponds to these phenomena's presence in other languages.
- Syllable position is irrelevant to assibilation. And, its role in affrication requires an additional explanation outside of this linguistic factor due to the high degree of lexicalization.

With these four observations in mind, I now turn to my conclusion where I wish to demonstrate how these points reflect sociolinguistic issues such as gender and language shift. I also show how they relate to these features' overall presence in CF and in other varieties of French. Finally, I reflect upon the cultural significance of the usage of these features to determine whether or not there are any other factors that contribute to the varying levels of assibilation and affrication in CF.

CONCLUSION

Through my research I have uncovered several key facts about the variation of /t/ and /d/ in CF that help us to more fully understand this dialect at the phonological level. My work here accomplished first and foremost my primary goal, which was to establish where and by whom each of my three variants is used. Through an analysis of over 7,500 tokens from 60 CF speakers, I determined that the occlusive variant is the predominant variant used in Lafourche and Vermilion. In turn, these two parishes simultaneously showed little to no substantial usage of either assibilation or affrication. In Avoyelles and St. Landry, on the other hand, there exists a large degree of variation for /t/ and /d/. While the occlusive remains the most common variant used by Avoyelles' CF community, there are substantial amounts of both assibilation and affrication in this region. Most importantly, it is evident that assibilation in Avoyelles is on the rise among its younger speakers.

St. Landry is the sole parish in which I found a majority presence of assibilation. I can therefore label this parish as the epicenter of assibilation usage in CF; at least in terms of the communities that I have examined here. Affrication in St. Landry was also higher than anywhere else, even without the tokens for *cadien*. My data for all of the parishes have shown, however, that this variant is not a common feature of CF. Further complicating my overall analysis of affrication was the idiosyncratic behavior of one speaker: Placido. While I have attributed a large percentage of affrication in CF to lexicalization, Placido's overt usage of the feature in myriad contexts ruled out this explanation for him. Instead, I propose that the explanation for his behavior is not linguistic but rather cultural. For him, affrication is an emblematic identity marker that he uses to substantiate his "Cajun-ness."

Placido, born in 1950, is a middle generation speaker from St. Landry. He spent a number of years working both outside of Louisiana (in Texas) and on an offshore oil platform. Because of this, I hypothesize that his background led to an increased usage in affrication in his idiolect. Since affrication is a stereotypical marker of CF, at least such is the case with the word *cadien*, he strongly favors its usage so as to convey his outsider status and to signal to those around him that he is authentically Cajun. The importance of “sounding Cajun” is well attested in Dubois and Horvath’s study of dialectal features in Cajun Vernacular English (2002). While in my case it is French and not English, I believe that the same still applies.

As for the origin of Placido’s high rate of affrication (nearly 80%), I see two possibilities. First, Placido’s affrication could be a result of language borrowing. There are CF speakers in both Texas as well as in the oil industry. It is possible that he came into contact with another variety of CF that affricates at a high rate, and this influenced his own idiolect. His years in an open network, in conjunction with his desire to sound Cajun, have thus resulted in a high level of /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ in his speech. My second hypothesis takes us back to the categorical lexicalization of *cadien*. It is equally possible that Placido’s idiolect depicts an internal phonological development. Over time, he started to not only affricate *cadien* but began producing /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ in other contexts. This would equally explain his high rate of affrication that not only greatly exceeds that of other speakers from St. Landry but is also higher than any other speaker in my study. I cannot determine at this time which (if either) of these hypotheses is correct. But, his use of affrication as an identity marker certainly appears to correspond with other similar works involving the use of dialectal features to achieve some sort of rhetorical effect (Dubois & Horvath, 2002; Johnstone, 1999; Schilling-Estes, 1998).

In returning to assibilation, by discovering exactly where one finds this variant I am able to expand upon previous research on the feature by linguists such as Picone and Valdman (2005) and Russell (2010). As the predominant variant of St. Landry and an increasingly common feature of Avoyelles, I can assert that assibilation plays a more widespread role in CF than previously thought. Russell acknowledges that assibilation did at one point occur in Livingston Parish (2010, p. 6), which suggests that it historically had a more extensive usage than it does today. Based on this information and my data, I would argue that the absence of assibilation in Lafourche and Vermilion is not due to it having never existed in these regions but rather that it has since faded away. These southern parishes therefore represent areas in which assibilation became unfavorable for some yet unknown reason. At the same time, in more northern areas like Avoyelles and St. Landry, the feature not only persists, but it is even gaining popularity among the young. A north/south division of CF is not possible based solely on this one feature, but its variation in these communities does support the notion that CF is not a uniform dialect.

Following the establishment of geographic boundaries for these variants, my work here also treats the role of gender in language. As I outlined in Chapter 2, linguists have previously established that men and women behave differently in terms of linguistic preferences, even sometimes at the phonological level (Alba, 1990; Dubois & Horvath, 1998; Fasold, 1990; Labov, 2001; Macaulay, 1978; Mougeon & Beniak, 1991; Orozco, 2010; Trudgill, 1983). While men are apt to use vernacular features freely in their speech more or less regardless of the situation, women show a high level of linguistic awareness. Thus, women often prefer what they perceive to be the prestige forms of language over the use of dialectal features. From a sociolinguistic point of view, Trudgill proposes that this stems from the woman's typically closer involvement

with child rearing and their desire for their children to have access to the benefits that accompany speaking ‘correctly’ (p. 167).

The relevance of gender to my study of /t/ and /d/ is two-fold. First, I was able to substantiate my suspicions regarding differences in the /t,d/ behavior of CF men and women. In a female sub-sample consisting of 12 women CF speakers from the corpus, I discovered that they overwhelmingly prefer the occlusive (85%) to either assibilation (12%) or affrication (3%). These percentages, which differ greatly from those of my male speakers, establish the different phonological behavior of CF men and women. Women CF speakers almost exclusively use the occlusive. Men, on the other hand, incorporate both assibilation and affrication into their speech. Secondly, these results serve to validate an original hypothesis of mine that assibilation and affrication are vernacular forms in CF. Thus in turn; the occlusive represents the norm or prestige form for this variety of French.

As I mentioned in both the Introduction and Chapter 2, one cannot have a meaningful linguistic discussion of modern CF without acknowledging the changing state of the language and its overall decline in general usage among Cajuns. The decline of French in Louisiana, which began in the decades after the Civil War, has led to such a drastic attrition of CF that most agree the language as a mother tongue will disappear sometime within our lifetimes. The shift from French to English in Louisiana’s Cajun communities does present us with a unique opportunity to observe certain linguistic changes, however. Linguistic changes in an attriting language have received considerable attention over the past few decades. Beginning with Dorian’s work in the 1970s and 1980s, the study of minority languages in the midst of language shift/language death has become increasingly popular. As she (and others after her) note, all languages experience natural changes over the course of their existence. However, the speed at

which these changes occur is heightened in the case of language shift. We are thus able to witness linguistic changes in a relatively short period of time that might have otherwise taken centuries (1981). It is this speed of changes that influenced my decision to include age as a social factor.

While the study of languages in this type of situation has become increasingly popular over the last few decades, there remains an overall dearth of study at the phonological level. One such study that does exist—and in fact even involves a dialect of French in North America—examined vowel shifts and the influence of English as a majority language (Bullock & Gerfen, 2004). After noting that certain phonetic features converged with English counterparts while others remained wholly French, Bullock and Gerfen determined that the phonological effect of a dominant language is not predictable. My results showed even less of an influence from English than theirs. Since the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are commonplace in English, I originally hypothesized that they could occur more frequently in CF as a type of phonological convergence brought on by an external development. The relative infrequency with which I found affrication and its high degree of lexicalization, disprove this hypothesis, however. Furthermore, assibilation appeared more often in CF than did affrication despite its general absence from English. I conclude therefore that English phonology does not have an effect on CF in this instance and that affrication in CF stems from an internal development.

Another manner by which I hoped to observe the effects of language shift in CF was through my age factor. This possibility of observing rapid phonological changes accounts for my decision to divide my corpus of speakers into three distinct generations. Speaker age even proved to be (after location) my most significant social factor at play in the use of assibilation and affrication. I believe that this at least partially represents quantitative proof of the impact of

language shift on the phonology of CF. There is a clear rise in the use of assibilation, for example, between the generations. The oldest speakers disfavor the use of /ts/ and /dz/ while the middle and young speakers demonstrate the expansion of the feature over time. I noted a similar albeit slightly less pronounced pattern for affrication. There, the old speakers hardly used /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ at all while the middle and young generations showed an increase in usage. My data here serve therefore as an example of how a minority language can exhibit drastic phonological changes in a relatively short period of time. Despite the fact that my speakers were all born within eighty years of one another, which I would argue is but a wrinkle in time linguistically speaking, the expansions of both assibilation and affrication are quite evident.

In spite of the overall attrition of CF in Louisiana and the restricted use of the dialect among its young speakers, the young generation is continually expanding the usage of assibilation and affrication. The expansion of these variants also speaks to the irrelevance of Blyth's 'imperfect learning' theory (1997) with regard to my data. It cannot apply here because, despite CF attrition at the individual level, the young speakers have not simplified /t,d/ usage. Rather, they show greater variation than do the more fluent older generations.

Furthermore, the young generation's disregard for phonemic context motivates me to conclude that they are innovating and expanding the phonological rules of CF despite the overall attrition of the language. In the future, I contend that there will likely therefore no longer exist any discernible distinction between /t/ and /d/ in terms of whether or not they can be realized as one of these variants. Phonemic context as a governing factor over /t/ and /d/ will cease to be relevant as the CF phonological system simplifies.

One of the major reasons for which I initially became interested in this study and in CF in general was because I wanted to learn how this dialect relates to other varieties of French. In

modern linguistic studies of French in North America, the vast majority of them focus on the Canadian dialects (QF and AF). This is partially due to the fact that both QF and AF have significantly more speakers than CF. They also benefit from Canada's language policy recognizing French as an official language, which I believe fosters an environment in which they are likely to receive academic attention. Nevertheless, there is much that we can learn by incorporating CF into the discussion of French in North America. I pointed out in Chapter 3 that both assibilation and affrication serve as identifying phonological markers of these Canadian varieties. I do so not only as part of my goal to tie the three dialects into the same discourse but to also determine whether or not the development of these features in Canada sheds light on their presence in Louisiana.

Linguists have long recognized a high rate of assibilation as a feature of QF (see e.g., Dumas, 1987; Friesner, 2010; Poirier, 2009). At the same time, affrication serves as one of the defining features of AF (see e.g., Flikeid, 1984; Flikeid, 1997; King & Ryan, 1989; Lucci, 1972; Poirier, 2009). Cajuns are traditionally considered to be the descendants of Acadians expelled from Canada in the mid-eighteenth century. I therefore originally hypothesized that I would find a high usage of affrication in CF because of this historical link and the high degree to which the variant continues to exist in AF. I also based this hypothesis on my own personal experiences in Louisiana with CF speakers who used certain affricated words such as *cadien*, *moitié*, *Dieu*, and *tiens* with moderate frequency. This hypothesis turned out to be incorrect, as I have shown that affrication in CF is infrequent at best. Furthermore, roughly half of my tokens for affrication came from lexicalized *cadien*. In terms of the phonemes /t/ and /d/ then, CF actually has more in common with QF than it does with AF.

In the end, I have uncovered several important truths about CF. First, I have established the occlusive as both the predominant variant and the prestige form while assibilation and affrication represent the vernacular, with the latter being an increasingly lexicalized pronunciation. This in turn explains why one finds both assibilation and affrication more frequently among Cajun men than women. Second, I have observed certain changes between the generations of my study that correspond to the state of language shift and language death occurring in Louisiana's francophone communities. Even in the face of this attrition, assibilation and affrication are gaining popularity among young CF speakers. They are no longer respecting certain governing rules pertaining to phonemic context, for instance. The preference for assibilation over affrication simultaneously suggests that these changes do not correspond to the encroachment of the majority language. They instead represent natural phonological changes that happen to be occurring quickly in conjunction with the language shift. Finally, I have broached this subject in such a way that I can emphasize the significance of speaking about CF in relation to other varieties of French, particularly those in Canada.

The analysis of these features has thus yielded a great deal of information about assibilation and affrication in CF. These results also raised a few questions that require examination in the future. The Dubois Cajun French/Cajun English Corpus remains the most comprehensive and vast collection of CF recordings in the world. It is because of its size that I was able to include enough speakers so as to note not only personal or general variant preferences but also generational patterns. Since its completion in 1997, however, those speakers labeled as the young generation have obviously aged quite a bit and are now mostly in their mid to late forties. It would be beneficial not only to myself but to any future researchers using the corpus to record a new young generation who were born in the 1980s and even possibly the

1990s. I found that the current young generation is producing new rules regarding affricate usage. Thus, this new set of CF speakers would be helpful in validating my work here.

For assibilation in particular, which showed a dramatic increase in prevalence in Avoyelles and St. Landry, data provided by a new generation would allow me the chance to see whether or not it has become a truly salient feature of the CF in these speech communities. In the same vein as a new generation is the addition of speakers from other parishes. While these parishes represent four of the most francophone areas in Louisiana, there are several other communities where one finds a relatively high percentage of Francophones. Such parishes to possibly include are St. Martin, Evangeline, or Assumption. Speakers from parishes within Acadiana with a low percentage of Francophones—such as Calcasieu or St. James—could also be a helpful addition. These communities represent areas affected by language shift even more so than the rest, and could potentially offer insight into its linguistic ramifications on CF.

Even without the addition of a new set of speakers, there still exist some questions that I have not yet been able to answer. One such question is the exact origin of assibilation and affrication in CF. I can only hypothesize based on the literature that exists. It seems likely that assibilation did at one time exist to a higher degree in CF but has subsequently faded from most communities. Its usage in CF most likely dates back to the eighteenth century and is attributable to assibiling French speakers from New France who settled in Louisiana. Assibilation's scarcity nowadays in CF, I posit, lies in the heterogeneity of Louisiana's francophone communities, both past and present. Over time, the occlusive pronunciation of certain varieties encroached upon those with assibilation. Regions like Avoyelles and St. Landry, however, maintained the use of assibilation, which could be explained by the internal or network vitality of their speech communities.

At the same time, I posit that the presence of affrication in CF owes its explanation both to the nineteenth-century Acadians who settled in south Louisiana and to language borrowing. I support the first half of this claim by noting the abundance of affrication in AF and the historical ties between Acadians and Louisiana. Since Acadians have long spoken an affricating variety of French, they are most likely the ones responsible for its reinforcement and maintenance in Louisiana. Once again though, the existence of competing variants weakened the presence of affrication over time, and we now only find it to a small degree and only in Avoyelles and St. Landry. Finally, the categorical affrication of *cadien* represents the most visible example of borrowing and lexicalization regarding this feature's presence in CF. Affrication is therefore not solely an articulatory process but one attached to certain lexical items.

All of these hypotheses about the origins of assibilation and affrication in CF require further study. Since I have determined in my current work that geographic location is the most significant factor contributing to the rates of these features, I believe possible answers to their origins can be found in the study of CF in other parishes. And, this inclusion of new speakers from other francophone communities in Louisiana is the best method by which to continue the discussion of /t/ and /d/ variation in CF.

In the end, this study constitutes a valuable contribution to research on French in North America. By examining phonological traits that exist in both CF and varieties of French spoken in Canada, I have put forth a more comprehensive discussion of the language than one typically sees when these dialects are treated separately. Furthermore, as the first to study both assibilation and affrication in CF simultaneously, I have constructed a more complete picture of their usage in the dialect than previously existed. Finally, my study here also represents a worthy contribution to language attrition studies and to sociolinguistic research in general.

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APPENDIX: EXAMPLE OF CODING SHEET

Variant	Type of Articulation	Context	Syllable	Word	Time	Speaker Number	DOB	Generation	Parish	Gender
z	A	d	B	dit	29:04	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	29:05	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dix	29:17	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	29:32	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	boutique	29:42	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	boutique	29:44	38	1937	M	SLP	M
S	F	t	B	tué	29:51	38	1937	M	SLP	M
S	F	t	B	tué	29:56	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dit	30:25	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dit	30:28	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dit	30:28	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dit	30:29	38	1937	M	SLP	M
S	F	t	B	tuer	30:38	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	E	entendu	31:10	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	31:35	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	32:26	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	dix	32:39	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	34:35	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	35:56	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	36:06	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	37:46	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	39:25	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	E	rendu	39:28	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	39:30	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	E	mardi	39:33	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	39:39	38	1937	M	SLP	M
Z	F	d	M	cadiens	39:41	38	1937	M	SLP	M
Z	F	d	M	cadien	39:53	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	habitude	40:24	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	40:45	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	E	mardi	40:46	38	1937	M	SLP	M
z	A	d	B	du	40:49	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	petit	41:00	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	B	tu	41:03	38	1937	M	SLP	M
s	A	t	E	habitude	41:04	38	1937	M	SLP	M

VITA

Aaron Emmitte was born in Tyler, Texas. At the age of 4, he and his family moved to Weatherford, Texas where he lived the majority of his life and attended school. In 2002, he enrolled at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. In the fourth year of his undergraduate studies, Aaron studied abroad at the Université de Nantes in Nantes, France for the Spring 2006 semester. This remains the single most rewarding experience of his life. He then received a Bachelor of Arts from TCU with a major in French and minor in Religion in August 2006.

After graduating from TCU Aaron moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana to begin graduate school at Louisiana State University. Immediately upon arriving in Louisiana, he became interested in the rich history and culture of Louisiana's French-speaking communities. This interest led to his eventual decision to focus the majority of his research on the linguistic issues surrounding Louisiana French. He completed his master's degree in French with a minor in Linguistics in December 2008. Directly thereafter he started work on his doctorate at LSU. He has since presented his research at a number of national and international conferences. In addition to Louisiana French, Aaron is also interested in phonetics and phonology, bilingualism, code-switching and borrowing, and the effects of language shift on minority languages.

Upon completion of his doctorate, Aaron will move to Washington, D.C. in July 2013 where he has accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor and Language Coordinator of the introductory French sequence in the Department of French at Georgetown University.